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ABSTRACT

Intended to supplement what is customarily taught in junior high school world history courses, this teacher's guide provides materials for three units on the role of women in world history. Each unit incorporates the student manual and includes background information, objectives, teaching procedures, learning activities, and a bibliography. Student assignments focus on oral history. In Unit I, students examine the role of women under feudalism in Western Europe and in China. Based on what they have learned about the rules of living at this time, students construct endings to stories and make cultural comparisons between Western Europe and China. Unit II analyzes the role of women during the industrial revolution. Topics include the creation of the working class woman and of the middle class ideal woman. The oral history assignment consists of an interview with a working couple with children. Unit III focuses on 20th century women in transition, particularly third world women. A major project is to research lives of outstanding women in various countries. For the oral history project, students look for common conditions between the women they have read about and the women they interview. The unit concludes with students making posters about the international women's movement. (KC)

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SO 013 234

World History Teacher Guide

IN SEARCH OF OUR PAST
Units in Women's History

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WOMEN IN CHANGE: TWENTIETH CENTURY WOMEN IN TRANSITION

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INTRODUCTION

Rationale

IN SEARCH OF OUR PAST grew out of the need we saw for a supplemental curriculum about women of different ethnic backgrounds that could be incorporated into existing American History and World History courses at the junior high school level. For years we had all been involved with writing a curriculum about women for different grade levels and in a variety of disciplines. Based on our collective experience we knew that traditional history textbooks included little about the history of women, the different peoples of America, non-Western peoples, or the lives of ordinary people as an integral part of history.

It is in junior high school that students generally get their first real introduction to history—American and World. It is also in junior high school that students characteristically are extremely concerned with their sense of themselves as female or male. For these reasons we considered the development of supplementary women's history materials to be especially important for the junior high school courses.

Priorities

We would have liked to incorporate multi-ethnic women's history materials into the entire junior high school American and World History curriculum. However, because of the limitations of time and resources, our materials were designed to be supplemental rather than comprehensive. Therefore, it became a top priority to create materials which were seen by teachers as being highly useful, and by students as having a high degree of interest. By focusing on these objectives, we could have realistic expectations that the materials would be integrated into the mainstream of the junior high school social studies program.

A number of criteria for curriculum development in women's history had been established very early among staff members as a condition to working on the project.

First, the staff committed itself to the development of a curriculum that is multi-ethnic. It was agreed that time periods selected in American History should be focal times not only in the history of white Americans but also in the history of African Americans, Chicanos, Asian and Native Americans. It was agreed as well that the concepts around which the World History materials were developed should be focal ones in the history of non-Western as well as Western peoples.

Second, the staff was committed to the development of a curriculum that is multi-leveled. It was our intent that the materials meet the needs of students reading at many different levels, and provide ample opportunity for high potential students to continue the study of that period.

Third, it was a priority that the materials be devised to interest students so that the units relate to them as part of their lives. Illustrations, as well as written content and activities, we felt, were essential in order to involve junior high school students in the materials.

Fourth, the staff determined that each unit include an oral history component in which students could experience themselves as historians, as participants, in the process of history. The oral history component is especially important to women's history since so much of it has had to be rescued through that technique.

Finally, since the American History curriculum would be designed for 8th graders, and the World History curriculum for 9th graders, and since American History courses are often one-semester courses and World History a two-semester course, we decided that the 8th grade curriculum should not be as conceptually complex as the 9th grade and that the American History units would be designed to prepare the students for World History. The effect for students would thus be a cumulative one.

Design

We selected three periods in American History and three worldwide phenomena in World History upon which to concentrate. We made our choices of unit topics after analyzing information obtained from interviewing and surveying history teachers in two school districts. From these sources we derived the necessary information about the topics teachers taught, those areas in which they would like additional information about women, and a description of their perspectives in teaching American History and World History.

Based on these considerations, we chose to design six units: 1) Native American Women in Pre-Columbian America, 2) Southern Women from 1820 to 1860, and 3) Women in Struggle, a unit on women as immigrants and workers from 1820 to 1940, in the American History course; in World History we chose to focus on 1) Women under Feudalism in Western Europe and China, 2) Women and the Industrial Revolution in England and Japan, and 3) Women in Change, a study of 20th century women in transition.

Each of these units is concerned with multi-ethnic women's history and builds progressively toward the following unit in terms of complexity of concepts and development of skills. For example, the first unit in the American History curriculum concentrates on one group of women, uses primarily short stories to communicate its concepts and focuses on a few major ideas. The first unit in the World History curriculum focuses on a societal world order in relation to women and includes student readings that are essays as well as activities that involve students' comparisons of different cultures. Though the entire curriculum is designed as a whole, each part of it can stand on its own. Teachers, then, may choose to do any one or all of the units depending on the needs of their classes.

It is important to note that each of the units is designed to supplement what is customarily taught in American and World History. The unit on Southern Women, 1820-1860, for example, is not a replacement for the study of slavery, but an attempt to incorporate into that study the pivotal relationship between slavery and the Antebellum Southern concept of the patriarchal plantation.

The materials are presented in the form of two teacher guides and two student manuals, with a guide and manual for each grade level. The two teacher guides are identical in format. Both are introduced with a table of contents enumerating the materials included, followed by the three units. Each of the units is accompanied by teacher background information and teaching instructions. The background information is designed to provide the teacher with a review of the topic being taught. The teaching instructions provide specific procedures for instruction, guidelines for class discussion, and suggestions for additional activities. A second section in the teacher guides for each unit contains the student materials. This format enables the teacher to review the background information and teaching instructions for a given unit, in the first section of the guide, and then turn to the second section to review the readings and/or activities designed for students. The outline at the beginning of each unit guide provides the necessary page information in linking the teaching instructions for a given lesson, designated by "T" and the page number, with the student materials, which are designated by "S" and the page number. The unit outline also provides the teacher with an overview of the course of instruction covered by the unit.

The student manuals are designed to be used by each student in the class. Each student will therefore have her/his own copy of reading assignments, worksheets, and homework activities. Students can write in the manuals, using them as workbooks, or teachers can assign the manuals to students along with copies of the worksheets, and collect the manuals at the end of the unit for use in following semesters.

The loose-leaf format enables teachers to use and/or reproduce any part or the entirety of the student materials.

Teachers can incorporate their own particular emphasis and focus into their use of the materials or they may choose to follow the suggestions for teaching the materials as we have designed them.

We believe the effect of the selected format is that teachers can be both creative and focused in their presentation of the curriculum.

Annotated bibliographies are also provided for teachers if they wish to extend the scope of our work in their classrooms.

Student Focus

Particular care was taken that the short stories, essays and activities are not only constructed to focus on particular historical processes but relate to the lives of students as they are now living them, and to their own perception of themselves as female or male.

The activities also attempt to demonstrate for students the relationship between events that happened in the past and the world as it is today. The curriculum is very much concerned with the students' perception of concepts in history, as well as the presentation of historical facts. The activities are varied so that students who have different interests can become involved in the curriculum. There are activities that are artistically oriented, activities that allow for analytical thinking, activities that concentrate on oral presentations, and activities that require written presentations.

The oral history component in each unit is especially oriented toward this end. Through the use of the interview technique, students participate in the recording of history and they also learn that history is related to their lives: that it has some influence on who they are becoming.

Oral Histories

In collecting oral histories, students learn that "history" is alive and in the making. In the process of interviewing everyday people, often members of their own families, students can develop a feeling of participation in history making which is difficult to do following traditional text-oriented classroom procedures. And as students compare the information they have obtained from the interviews and shared difficulties encountered in the interview process, they begin to understand the process of interpreting and writing history.

Oral history assignments provide an opportunity for teachers to explore with students some of the gaps, omissions and prejudices which exist in the history as written in our texts. A major function of oral history assignments is to create this awareness and to involve students in the process of filling the gaps—to recover "lost" histories. It is not unusual that students become involved in the everyday lives of excluded groups—women, minorities, and children. In many cases they "discover" they belong to one of these groups, and as a result their view of history is broadened.

An oral history assignment is included in each of the six units. The design at both grade levels is to move from a simple and straightforward interview assignment to a more sophisticated and complex assignment. In this way students build interview skills and the ability to analyze the information obtained through the interviews. Also, the skills learned in the 8th grade can be applied in the more difficult 9th grade interview tasks.

It has been our experience that there is a direct relationship between time spent preparing students for the interviews and interviews that are productive and exciting. Classroom preparation should cover the rationale for oral histories, the purpose of the interview, the protocol for interviewing, and a careful review of the interview questions and format. A mock interview in which students participate is an effective pre-interview activity. Students not engaged in the interview can act as observers, giving the interviewer feedback on the questions asked, how they could be more effectively phrased, and the manner in which the interview was conducted. Interview direction sheets are provided within the units, and it is imperative that the teacher discuss these with the students to give them the guidelines they need to approach a person for an interview, to explain the purpose of the interview, to be sensitive to the person being interviewed, and to develop listening as well as inquiry skills.

The use of tape recorders enables students to recall and analyze the interview in greater detail. Care must be taken to obtain the consent of the person being interviewed, if a tape recorder is used during the interview.

"Women's history" is a new idea for students and in order for the idea to be accepted, teaching of the subject must be accompanied by attitudinal change in students, both female and male. It has been our experience that an important strategy in assisting students to make this attitudinal change is to give them the tools and the tasks so they can learn about themselves as they learn about others. As interviewers collecting oral histories, students clearly assume this task. They learn by doing.

Resistance

The teacher should be prepared to deal with resistance to the study of women's history—from both female and male students. The traditional history is the history with which most students feel comfortable. It is the history of important people, clear power relationships, events like wars, economic disasters, presidencies and foreign policy. Inevitably there will be students who want a return to the familiar. The unfamiliar seems uncomfortable and threatening.

There can be no question that women's history is different. There can be no question that change is implied when detailed accounts of the economic catastrophes of the decade after the Civil War are forsaken for an analysis of the impact of Reconstruction on members of a black family, or when America's participation in World War II is dealt with in summary fashion, thereby allowing for an analysis of the effects of the relocation experience on Japanese American women.

It is our experience that every advantage lies in the teacher introducing the differences in historical interpretation at a very early stage. It is also a most effective strategy to involve the students in activities which enable them to develop their own rationale for departure from the traditional history. These activities can be centered on the historical materials used in class, such as texts, newspapers, and magazines. Students can make investigations of their texts to determine for themselves gaps, omissions, and biases.

These investigations can be expanded, if needed, to include all areas of society involved in socialization: television, popular music, athletics and physical education, and student enrollment in high school classes (for this, use the Title IX review required of every school district).

By involving students in an early needs assessment, the teacher can refer to this activity as the class proceeds with the women's history units. It is advisable to have a stockpile of activities and strategies available to draw upon. Some students will react positively, some negatively to the different emphasis they are hearing in history. Some will react immediately, others will react more slowly, some will react very late. Having introduced the subject, and having involved the students in the needs assessment and development of their own rationale for change in historical interpretation, there is a good base upon which to build, and to which to add. It is important, as well, to listen to student concerns and to allow students the room they need to change, however slowly or rapidly. Finally, the units themselves have been designed to deal with changing attitudes.

It is important that female students understand woman's role throughout history. This is information that has been too long denied. Males, as well, have much to gain from historical accuracy; from it they can better develop a sense of their own proportion.

Introduction to World History Units

The World History curriculum consists of three units: Women under Feudalism in Western Europe and China; Women and the Industrial Revolution; and Women in Change: Twentieth Century Women in Transition. Within each unit we have concentrated on marriage and the family, women's role in the economy, and the emergence of sex-role stereotypes as aspects central to an understanding of women.

In these units we have integrated women into an account of three of the most important social forms and forces in world history: feudalism, capitalist industrialization, and the dynamic transitional developments of the twentieth century.

In the unit on Feudalism we examine the nature of feudalism as a social system in both China and Western Europe and the extent to which feudal patriarchy restricted the lives of women in both areas of the world. Students have the opportunity to discover for themselves some vestiges of feudal attitudes toward women that remain with us today.

In the Women under Feudalism, we examine the nature of feudalism as a social system in both China and Western Europe and the extent to which feudal patriarchy restricted the lives of women in both areas of the world. Students have the opportunity to discover for themselves some vestiges of feudal attitudes toward women that remain with us today.

In Women in Change we look at women in social movements in which they are defining their own concerns, organizing for change and seeking new ways of life. We show women adjusting to changes in their traditional roles as a result of revolutions and social changes brought about by industrialization.

Each of the units contains oral history activities. These move from simple to more complex activities and concepts. In the unit on feudalism, students use one major question and interview their parents. In industrialism, two interview exercises are introduced. In the final unit on change, students are asked to conduct a full set of interview questions and there is an extensive classroom analysis of the results of the interview.

It is hoped that the ninth grade student will find in these units an historical basis for understanding the commonality of concerns among growing numbers of women in today's world.

UNIT 1

Women under Feudalism in Western Europe and China

WOMEN UNDER FEUDALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA
was developed by the following team of people:

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OUTLINE

I. **INTRODUCTION**

   A. TEACHER INTRODUCTION TO UNIT

   B. DEFINITION OF TERMS

      1. Teacher uses background information to introduce the unit and this activity.
      2. Students review worksheet.
      3. Class discussion of terms on worksheet.

   C. THE FEMALE IMAGE UNDER FEUDALISM (Map)

      1. Teacher uses background material to introduce this activity.
      2. Students review map.
      3. Class discussion of map and quotations.

II. **WOMEN OF FEUDAL WESTERN EUROPE**

   A. FEUDALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE

      1. Teacher uses background information to review with students key terms and concepts of feudalism.

   B. WOMEN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN FEUDALISM

      1. Teacher uses background information to introduce the topic of women and feudalism.
      2. Teacher instructs students on this topic, using suggestions for class discussion and student activity.

   C. FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN WESTERN EUROPE (Chart)

      1. Teacher introduces the activity.
      2. Students fill in blank chart and complete the worksheet.

   D. THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE

      1. Teacher uses "Women and Western European Feudalism" as background information to introduce the story.
      2. Students read the story (two versions available).
      3. Teacher leads class discussion in which students speculate on an ending to the story.
      4. Students complete worksheet "Looking for Clues."
      5. Students complete written assignment to write a story ending, using the clues they have found.
      6. Teacher uses summary questions to emphasize the concepts in the story.

   E. WOMEN AS WORKERS

      1. Women in the Economy of Feudal Europe.
         a. Teacher introduces the student reading.
         b. Students read "Women in the Economy of Feudal Europe."
         c. Students complete worksheet.
      2. Women Workers in the Towns of Europe
         a. Students study illustration.
         b. Students complete worksheet on illustration.

F. WOMEN AS RESISTERS
  1. Christine de Pisan
    a. Teacher introduces the student reading.
    b. Students read "Christine de Pisan: Author and Champion of Women's Equality."
    c. Students complete worksheet on reading.

III. WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA

A. FEUDALISM IN CHINA
  1. Teacher uses background information to review with students key terms and concepts of feudalism.

B. WOMEN IN THE CHINESE PATRIARCHY
  1. Teacher introduces and assigns the essay for student reading.
  2. Teacher instructs students on the topic of women and feudalism, using suggestions for class discussion and student activity.
  3. Students complete worksheet on this activity.

C. FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN CHINA—CHART
  1. Students study the chart.
  2. Teacher assists students in comparing the chart of China with the chart in Section II.
  3. Students complete worksheet on this activity.

D. AH AO
  1. Teacher uses background information to introduce the story to students.
  2. Students read "Ah Ao" and complete the worksheet.
  3. Teacher leads class discussion based on the worksheet questions.
  4. Students compare "Ah Ao" with "The Wife of Martin Guerre."
  5. Students write an ending for the story of Ah Ao.

E. CHINESE CHARACTERS TELL A STORY
  1. Teacher introduces the activity.
  2. Class completes worksheet on this activity.

F. WOMEN AS WORKERS
  1. Teacher uses background information to introduce the activity.
  2. Students read the essay "Women as Workers."
  3. Students complete the worksheet.
  4. Class discussion of reading and worksheet.

G. WOMEN AS RESISTERS
  1. Teacher uses background information to introduce the activity.
  2. Students read the story of "Hua Mu Lan" and answer questions on the worksheet provided.
  3. Teacher leads class discussion on the story.

IV. CULTURAL COMPARISONS: WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA

A. CODES OF CONDUCT

1. Students review the two charts of feudal hierarchy.
2. Teacher assists students in comparing similarities and differences in two systems as revealed by the charts.
3. Teacher introduces two student readings, "Letter to a Daughter in Feudal Europe" and "Letter from a Chinese Mother."
4. Through group work, students assess information in the readings and develop codes of conduct.
5. Teacher leads class discussion comparing various features of the codes of conduct.

B. WOMEN AS WORKERS

1. Teacher introduces this activity by assisting students in recalling information about the roles women played as workers under feudalism.
2. Working as a class, students discuss similarities and differences in the work roles played by women in the two systems.
3. Students compare the work of women under feudalism with women's roles today.

C. WOMEN RESISTERS IN FEUDAL EUROPE AND CHINA

1. Using the examples of Hua Mu Lan and Christine de Pisan, students compile information on some of the ways women resisted feudal patriarchy.
2. In class discussion, students compare the lives of these two women.
3. The teacher assists the students in assessing the forms of resistance in feudal Europe and China.

D. CONTEMPORARY ASPECTS

1. The teacher selects from a list of activities lessons appropriate for summarizing the unit and relating the concepts of the unit to the present day.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

GOALS

Students will learn that:

1. In a patriarchal society women are dominated and controlled by men.
2. Patriarchal attitudes and customs flourished under feudalism in Europe and China.
3. Essential support for feudal patriarchy came from similar teachings by the Christian Church of Europe and by Confucian scholars in China.
4. In both Europe and China, girls were carefully taught their submissive roles in society, while boys were taught to assume dominance.
5. In spite of their low status, women were essential to these feudal economies.
6. Some women in Europe and China, through exceptional skill or good fortune, were able to resist the restrictions of feudal patriarchy and to live in nontraditional ways.
7. Many present-day images of women stem from the attitudes of feudal patriarchy.

OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

1. Identify common features in the patriarchal attitudes and customs of feudal Europe and China.
2. Identify teachings of the Christian Church and of Confucius which supported a patriarchal society.
3. Identify differences in the expectations of boys and girls in the feudal culture.
4. Identify a variety of productive work engaged in by women under feudalism.
5. Define the terms *patriarchy, hierarchy,* and *feudalism.*
6. Recognize other terms relating to feudal society: *peasant, serf, vassal, manor, lord, fief.*
7. List reasons for women's acceptance of their inferior status under feudal patriarchy.
8. Give examples of Asian and European women who lived in nontraditional ways during feudal times and identify their commonalities.
9. Identify present-day attitudes and practices relating to women which stem from feudal patriarchy.

Teacher Introduction to Unit

> *In the course of a generation, all of the women born into a family leave it, and all of the women who become established members of the family are those who entered it first as strangers. This is the patriarchal system. The family continues, generation by generation, as an endless line of males, passing on the seed from father to son, from father to son. The woman's function is a secondary one—to receive the seed, to nurture it, and thus* ***to build up the family of [her] husbands and [her] sons.***[1]

The purpose of this unit is not to cover the entire period of Western European feudalism and Chinese feudalism in relation to the condition of women. Western European feudalism lasted for seven to eight hundred years and Chinese feudalism for almost 2000 years. Within these time periods, there are, of course, many changes in the perception of and condition of women. Instead of covering these shifts, we are focusing on the essential quality of both Eastern and Western feudalism systems—that they were based on a patriarchal model of the family, in which man was seen as superior, and woman as inferior.

In concentrating on the relationship between the familial model and the societal model, we will be using three important terms: *hierarchy, patriarchy* and *feudalism*. By hierarchy we mean a system of ranking people in order of their importance. By patriarchy we mean the domination of the male over the mean a hierarchical social system based on land ownership and land tenure. Clearly, patriarchy is not the only form of hierarchy, nor is feudalism the only societal system that is patriarchal.

In European and Chinese feudalism, a tiny minority of men propounded this idea of patriarchy, basing their beliefs on what they conceived to be sound principles, religious and secular. In Europe, religious attitudes derived in part from the Judaic tradition which emphasized God as Patriarch and denied women participation in religious and political life. In addition, Church fathers believed with Aristotle that women were biologically inferior to men. They argued that since the perpetuation of the family was carried on through the male seed, a woman's chief obligation was to bear a son. This theory was an important support for feudal patriarchy which depended on the transmission of land being handed down through the oldest male child.

In Europe these beliefs became a part of the law and the literature developed by both secular and religious institutions. In China these same ideas were formulated in a code of ethics by Confucius in the 5th century and perpetuated by mandarin scholars for 2,000 years. Confucius believed that order and harmony were based on social relations, especially between inferiors and superiors. Since the observance of family ties in a hierarchy of unconditional obedience was essential to social order, woman, as inferior, was to obey man. Since the continuation of the family name was the major purpose of marriage, a wife's chief obligation was to bear sons.

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[1] ***Marriage East and West,*** **David and Vera Mace. Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York, 1959. p. 42.**

Within these belief systems, women had few rights and little freedom. But because the work they did was essential to the survival of the society, they managed to exercise some minimal control of their lives. And in Western Europe, some privileged women were able to get an education or to practice business. This unit, then, covers the role of women as workers within these feudal societies, as well as gives some indicators as to how women resisted the restraints imposed upon them. However, though there were periods of time when conditions improved somewhat for some women, the majority of women continued through the long periods of Western European and Chinese feudalism to be shackled by the patriarchal system.

The feudal codes had a tremendous impact on the attitudes of succeeding generations in both Europe and China. Women as well as men were socialized with the belief in women's inferiority in every area. Women's passive role in courtship, their submissiveness in marriage, and their secondary role in political life are all heritages from the past. Only in the twentieth century have women gained the right to control their own property, to sue for divorce, to vote, and to have credit in their own name. These minimal gains have been achieved only with a great deal of struggle against the ideology of patriarchy.

Definition of Terms

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Understanding the three concepts—feudalism, patriarchy and hierarchy—is crucial to understanding this unit. It is important that students develop a familiarity with the meaning of these words and a sense of the ways in which the concepts interrelate. This activity is therefore an introduction to the unit.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Allot time for the students to read and review the terms on the student worksheet.
2. IMPORTANT CONCEPTS
   patriarchy
   hierarchy
   feudalism
3. Ask students if they can think of other words with the root *patri* or *pater*. Ask students if they know the word for *rule by mother* (matriarchy). What words do they know with the root of *matri* or *mater*?
4. Read the definitions aloud and discuss the three concepts.
5. Discuss the interrelationships of the three concepts.
6. Working as a class, see if students can find any way there can be equality or equal rights for the people living in a patriarchal society. If the purpose of a patriarchy is not equality, what, then, is the goal of ordering society in a patriarchal manner?

THE FEMALE IMAGE UNDER FEUDALISM

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

This activity defines the geographical areas to be studied in this unit. The quotations establish the low status of women in both Western Europe and China under feudalism and offer comparisons with current images of women. Listing negative words to describe women illustrates the socialization process used to convince women of their inferior status. When a woman hears constantly how stupid and unworthy she is, she begins to believe it. It is important for students to appreciate the pressures on women from the teachings of Confucius in China and of the Christian Church in Europe.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Students look at the map.

A. The following questions should be answered through class discussion.

1. Which area is shaded in the large map on the left-hand page?
2. Which area is shaded in the large map on the right-hand page?
3. How many modern nations can you name from the two shaded areas?

B. Have students read aloud these quotations from Europe:

1. Woman's authority is nil.
2. The female is more imperfect than the male.
3. For Adam was first formed, then Eve.
4. If you have a female child, set her to sewing and not to reading.
5. The female is an empty thing and easily swayed; she runs great risks when she is away from her husband.
6. . . . idleness is a great danger to both man and woman, but more to the woman.

C. Ask students:

Have you ever heard or read any of these sayings before?

Do they sound like other sayings or thoughts about women you have heard? If so, were they said in fun or seriously?

Do you accept any of these quotes as true or partially true?

D. Have students read aloud the quotes on the Asian map. These quotations come from Confucius or are Chinese proverbs originating before the time of Christ.

1. As woman sow, the seeds won't grow.
2. If women enter the stable, the draft animals won't prosper.
3. Marry a man if you want food or clothes.
4. Women are as useful as a deaf ear.
5. Women have long hair but short ideas.
6. Never trust a woman though she has given you 10 sons.

E. Ask students:

1. How do these people feel about women?
2. What kinds of things are they saying about women? Are they complimentary, or are they unflattering?
3. How do you think women in Western Europe and China felt about themselves?
4. Is there any difference between the sayings from one continent to another?
5. What words would you use to describe women according to these quotations?

   Write the words in one column on the board as students respond. Ask students to change *negative* words into their *positive* counterparts and list them in a POSITIVE column.
6. Discuss the function these sayings could serve in creating attitudes of superiority and inferiority under a patriarchy.

WOMEN OF FEUDAL WESTERN EUROPE

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The background information on "Feudalism in Western Europe" may be used as a review if your students have already covered feudalism, or as necessary concepts they must know in order to understand this unit if they have not covered feudalism. It is not a replacement for a unit on feudalism.

To facilitate the review of feudalism and introduction of the topic of women under feudalism, the following terms and questions can be utilized by the teacher.

A. **IMPORTANT CONCEPTS** and words to be emphasized

- land ownership
- fief
- free men
- nobility
- peasants
- serfs
- manor
- knights

B. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion

1. What were the conditions in Europe during the ninth century which led to the development of the feudal system?
2. Why do you think it was a slowly evolving system, taking place at different times in different parts of Europe?
3. Why was loyalty an important part of the feudal contract? What do you think happened when a few lords became very powerful?
4. How did *most people* earn a living in feudal times?
5. Which *class* under *feudalism* had the *greatest number of people*? Which *class* had the *greatest power*?
6. If a patriarchal family depended on the oldest son, what do you think happened to the younger sons?
7. A daughter could inherit land if there were no sons. When she married what happened to her inheritance?
8. What role did the Christian Church play in the feudal system?
9. Can there be equality under a patriarchy?

FEUDALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE
Teacher Background

FEUDAL SYSTEM

During the ninth century in Europe, civil war and bloodshed followed the breakup of Charlemagne's empire. Industry and trade could not function and people left the towns to return to the country and agriculture. Land was the main source of wealth, and farming became the basis of the economy.

Without law and order, people needed protection. For almost 700 years, a slowly evolving system called feudalism provided this security. The feudal system was a series of political, economic, and social relationships based on the *ownership of land*. The name *feudal* comes from *fief*, the land given to a knight by his lord in return for military services. A noble looking for protection would place himself as a *vassal* under the control of a more powerful individual who became his lord.

This was an important contract, with responsibilities for both individuals. One owed loyalty and service; the other promised protection and land. These relationships existed only within the nobility and the Church. The Church eventually owned one-third of Europe's landed property.

MANORS

The *manorial system* provided the economic structure for feudal society. It regulated the lives of the *peasants*, their relationships with the lord of the *manor*, and the methods of agriculture. The *manor* was a self-contained estate of the lord which provided the food and clothing for all people who lived and worked on it. The wealth of the lord depended upon the *peasants* who worked his domain. Feudal and manorial systems established fixed classes: the nobility and the clergy, who owned the land, and the peasants, who worked the land.

PEASANTS

About 95% of the population belonged to the *peasantry*. A very few of these were *freemen* or tenant farmers who paid rent to the lord for the use of the land. However, the greatest number of *peasants* were *serfs* who were bound to the land. Although they were not considered slaves, they were at the mercy of the lord. In addition to their labor on his domain, serfs paid fees for the use of his land, his mills and other services. They were not considered part of the feudal system and yet their labor made possible the agricultural economy which maintained the nobility and the Church.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Christian Church was a strong and tightly knit organization. All of Western Europe was known as Christendom. The influence and power of the Church crossed political boundaries. People looked to it for their salvation. At birth they were baptized into the Church and at death they received a blessing which enabled them to enter heaven. Although the Church was a feudal landholder, Church law was separate from feudal law in that the courts were run by the clergy. People were subject to the rules and punishments of both king and clergy.

The Christian Church as an organization took part in feudal land agreements and was the vassal of a number of lords and kings. It was, therefore, an important part of the feudal system, and it shared common interests with the noble landholders. At times, however, the Church and nobles were in conflict. The clergy was not considered part of the nobility, but the higher Church officials enjoyed many of the privileges of that class. It was possible, but rare, for peasants to become priests and eventually rise to the top of the Church hierarchy. The Church provided a refuge from difficult conditions for some women if they wished to become nuns and enter convents. A few women held important positions as abbesses or as the heads of the convents. However, only those women who could afford a dowry, a gift of money or land, were able to take advantage of this opportunity.

WOMEN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN FEUDALISM

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

This reading focuses attention on the role of women under feudal patriarchy in Europe during the Middle Ages. This is important information because this aspect of history has been generally overlooked by historians who prepare secondary textbooks.

"Women and Western European Feudalism," provides the teacher with information which is to be conveyed to students in the course of instruction accompanying the student activities in this section. The essay introduces there major concepts:

1. How patriarchy affected the lives of European feudal women
2. Women as workers under the feudal system
3. European women resisters to feudal patriarchy

A. **IMPORTANT CONCEPTS** and words to be emphasized

- cult of the Virgin Mary
- courtly love
- midwifery
- healers
- witchery
- *femmes soles*
- religious sects
- patriarchy

B. **SPECIFIC POINTS** for class discussion

1. Christian explanation for Adam's "fall"
2. Aristotle's view of woman
3. Christian and Jewish view of women
4. Concept of courtly love
5. Connection between women's chastity and patriarchal inheritance
6. Reasons for infant marriages
7. Contradiction between the belief in women's inferiority and their importance as economic producers
8. The role of nunneries in the lives of feudal women

C. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion:

1. Where did people during feudal times get their picture of what women were supposed to be?
2. Compare the concept of courtly love with the cult of the Virgin Mary in terms of the impact on women's lives.
3. What was the most important duty of a woman under the feudal hierarchy?
4. What was the main purpose of marriage during feudalism? *Choose one.*

   a. romantic b. economic c. political
5. What rights did women have?
6. Compare the lives of peasant women, noblewomen and town women.
7. What were some of the reasons for women entering nunneries? How did the life of a nun or an abbess differ from the lives of the women described above?
8. Why were women attracted to the new religious sects?

D. **STUDENT ACTIVITY**

Can you give some examples of how the double standard in behavior worked for men and women under feudal patriarchy?

Men *could* ______________________ Women *could not.*
Men *could* ______________________ Women *could not.*
Men *could* ______________________ Women *could not.*

Are there any customs today which say that

Men *should* ______________________ Women *should not.*
Men *should* ______________________ Women *should not.*
Men *should* ______________________ Women *should not.*

WOMEN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN FEUDALISM
Teacher Background

IMAGES OF WOMEN

Europeans in the Middle Ages formed their images of what women were supposed to be from the Christian Church, whose teachings and ceremonies were part of the daily life of every individual. As the institutional character of the Church developed, women's legal and social rights were diminished. In the Church hierarchy women were denied the right to participate in religious ceremonies and were denied formal education. Church officials had religious reasons for their attitudes toward women The early founders of Christianity placed the blame on Eve for Adam's fall from grace. As Eve's daughters, all women were considered weak and easily led into sin. They argued that women needed the care and control of men so that they would not get into trouble.

The Church scholars were influenced by Aristotle, who believed that women, biologically, were inferior creatures, useful mainly as the means of reproducing the species. In the 11th and 12th centuries, scholars rediscovered Aristotle and in the 13th century the great theologian of his age, Thomas Aquinas, worked Aristotelian thought into his view of women. He wrote of "making use of a necessary object, woman, who is needed to preserve the species or to provide food and drink." Also, "her unique role is in conception . . . since for other purposes men would be better assisted by other men."[1]

The founders of Christianity also followed traditional Judaic customs and kept women in the home, forbidding them to have an education or to participate in religious ceremonies. A Jewish woman was to perform all the household tasks to free her husband from domestic duties so he might have more time to devote to religious studies.

Juxtaposed with this view of women, there appeared in the 11th century a view of womanhood as something pure, something to be adored. This was seen in the cult of the Virgin Mary, who came to personify the feelings of compassion and forgiveness. However, rather than raising attitudes about women, Mary's isolation from real life and the characteristics of most women merely served to degrade women. The Virgin Mary was pointed to as an ideal and was used to show how far women were from that ideal.

The romantic counterpart to the cult of the Virgin was the concept of courtly love, which began in aristocratic circles in Southern France and then spread throughout the continent. This element of court life set the standard for courteous behavior and chivalry. Finding expression in songs and ballads sung by troubadours and in poems written by knights, love was portrayed as having nothing to do with marriage, with having children or even with sex. A man's love for an idealized woman was seen as the way he could achieve his salvation, on earth and in heaven. "Ladies" were worshipped as the inspiration for all higher aspirations and brave deeds.

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[1] *The Medieval World,* F. Heer, World Publishing Co., New York, 1961, p. 265.

Yet rather than a reflection of a greater reverence for women, courtly love became a stylized part of a growing "polite society." It was the beginning of the idea of putting women on a pedestal. It was never applied to women from the lower classes.

After the flowering of romantic love in the 12th and 13th centuries, there followed a period of rather extreme misogyny, found in the songs and literature. One popular theme was to list all women's vices, which were attributed to their weak nature.

RESTRICTED RIGHTS OF WOMEN

In feudal society generally, women were not considered whole persons with individual rights. Their chief roles were as mothers of sons and wives of husbands. Their most important duty was to bear male heirs. The feudal system was patriarchal, and therefore there could be no real equality for women.

Religious and feudal leaders agreed that a woman's faithfulness to her husband was the most important consideration. Feudal patriarchy depended upon the transmission of land from father to oldest legitimate son. If there was any doubt about a woman's chastity, the patriarchal inheritance could be endangered. A double standard of sexual morality resulted, where women were expected to live by rules which did not apply to men.

DISOBEDIENCE

Punishment for breaking these rules was also unequal. In every social class for almost every crime, disobedience was punished by force. Church law agreed with feudal law that wife beating was permissable. In fact, it was recommended as a way of training a woman for greater spirituality. Adultery by a woman could be punished by death, as this act violated both feudal and Church teachings. Although not approved, a man's unfaithfulness was not considered serious.

MARRIAGE

Children were often promised in marriage when they were still infants. Marriage was usually based not on romance, but on economic consideration to improve the finances of both families. The fathers arranged the match, often without consulting either the bride or groom. The daughter of a serf had to get the permission of the lord before she could marry. A girl usually married by the age of fourteen, left her parents and became a member of her husband's family. Sometimes she never saw her own family again. Beginning with her marriage, she owed her loyalty to the new family and obedience to its patriarch. Her responsibilities lay in producing sons and helping to manage the household. Above all, she was to be a chaste wife, never giving anyone the slightest doubt of her virtue.

THE REALITY OF THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN

The beliefs about the inferiority of women were, however, in conflict with the fact that men could not do without women. Women on all levels of feudal society played an essential role in the economic and social life of the Middle Ages.

Thousands of peasants were only lightly touched by the ideals about what women should or should not do. Most lived their day-to-day lives in a rough and ready equality between the sexes. The necessity of survival forced men and women to share the chores on the family's holding, which included working alongside each other in the fields and pastures. Woodcuts and tapestries show men and women together harvesting crops, caring for dairy animals, and doing other manual labor. Constant hard work and poverty characterized the peasant class, although this diminished somewhat in the 12th century when there developed, side by side, peasants suffering extreme poverty and others who were more well-to-do.

Women were not expected to fight, hunt, and plough, but they were expected to make the clothes, take care of the animals, prepare the food, manage their own household, bear children and give service in the lord's manor or fields. They did much of the sheep shearing. One important function was their responsibility to care for the sick. This led to the creation of a lay class of peasant women "doctors." Women, with their knowledge of herbs, were also the "pharmacists," the "surgeons," (surgery was considered a lesser art because it was not taught at the universities), and the midwives.

In some communities women were given formal training in medical practices, particularly in midwifery. But in the later Middle Ages the universities insisted on male professionalism, and women doctors, who because they were women could not receive this university training, receded into the background.

The later Middle Ages also produced the calculated repression of women peasant healers by the Church and the state through the great witch hunts which started in the 14th century. By the late 15th and early 16th centuries thousands and thousands of women were being executed. Women who were healers were accused of having magical powers, of being in league with the devil, and of being witches. The association of midwifery and witchery was particularly strong.

THE NOBLEWOMAN

The noblewoman was the one admired in the songs and poems of medieval writers. She was expected to be an image of beauty, grace and manners. However, at the same time she was expected to manage her large household and often her own land holdings. Particularly during the Crusades, when men were away from home for longer periods of time than in any other age of history, their wives tool over all their duties in their absence. Sometimes this meant defending the castle, collecting the rents, digging up the money to pay the ransom if the husband was kidnapped, and making sure the fields were productive.

Castles and great manor estates were self-sufficient. Management of a great household was much more complicated than today, and even if the noblewoman's servants were cheap or even unpaid (peasants often owed their lord service in his house), it was hard work to oversee them. Also, clothes and food for the large families and guests had to be provided. Almost everything was made right at home.

> Bread had to be baked in the bakehouse from corn often grown and ground on the manor, ale brewed in the brewhouse, butter and cheese made in the dairy. In the larder candles were made, bacon cured and winter meat salted down. . . . A lady could seldom give her family fresh meat in winter. . . . Nor was it only food which had to be prepared at home. Some at least of the . . . cloth worn by the household was spun and woven there.[1]

TOWN WOMEN

From the 11th century on, towns developed quickly within the feudal society. By the mid-13th century there was a sizable middle class and by the 14th century this class had considerable economic power.

Records show that women were important participants in the bustling town activities. Town women were expected to support themselves unless they married a wealthy man. Even a wealthy man's wife had plenty to do managing servants and children, tending to the sick in the family, and preparing the food. Food preparation might, in fact, take up much of her time. Supper, usually at six, might consist of eels, roasts, black pudding, lard pastry and larded milk. By nine at night, with the shutters bolted, she and her husband would go to sleep "well covered with good furs and white sheets."[2]

Many town women became indispensable in the conduct of the family's business. It Italy there was always endless discussion about whether or not women should be taught to read, but in reality an educated woman was a great asset to a business family. Often the family's income depended on her ability in accounting, in retailing, and in selling the products of her husband's work.

The wife of a craftsman usually worked alongside him. Women, more than men, engaged in more than one trade—for example, brewing and spinning. Women were admitted to certain guilds as widows and as guardians of dependent children.

In the Middle Ages, particularly in the towns, the constant wars, the town feuds, and the celibacy of monks resulted in a greater number of marriageable women than men. Since women were expected to support themselves, laws were passed to allow single women, called *femmes soles*, to carry on businesses in their own name. Also, like men, women could hire themselves out.

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[1] ***Medieval Women***, E. Power, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1975, p. 46.

[2] ***Age of Faith***, A. Fremantle, Time-Life Books, New York, 1965, p. 86.

THE NUNNERIES

Throughout the Middle Ages there was one place which offered women the possibility of receiving an education and gaining recognition and some degree of power. This was the nunnery.

Nunneries were havens for women to flee to from a bad marriage or to seek an alternative to marriage and childbearing. Usually a nun's family had to offer the church a dowry in exchange for accepting a female member. This meant that peasant women were generally prevented from becoming nuns.

Within the walls of the nunneries, women were taught to pray, learned to read and write, and managed their affairs without the dominance of men. Some nuns specialized in teaching, some wrote small religious plays, and some orders allowed their nuns to travel. Since the existing medical texts were available to them, the nuns learned about the use of drugs, planted their herbal gardens and often became the most competent healers.

Between the 6th and 12th centuries many abbesses (heads of the monasteries) were quite powerful and achieved a degree of equality with men. Some ruled over large pieces of land, took their place in political gatherings, were well-known scholars, and even helped raise armies for their kings. In the later Middle Ages the independent rule of the nuns became sharply restricted and women no longer held the important positions they once had.

NEW RELIGIOUS SECTS

In the 13th century religious movements mainly involving women began to grow. The most numerous were the Beguines. The Beguines created houses which were structured quite differently from the traditional monastic orders. The women took no formal vows, lived by no recognized rule and encouraged their members to function actively in the world. Perhaps the most radical thing they did was to accept the daughters of those people too poor to provide a dowry and to orient their teaching toward poor women.

The irregularity of groups such as the Beguines naturally evoked the suspicion of the Church. The formation of these groups was seen as an act of rebellion on the part of women who were seeking more than the Church was prepared to give them. The Beguines and another order, the Cathari, were condemned for heresy. One charge was that these heretics allowed women to perform the functions of a priest, including the consecration of the communion bread.

FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN WESTERN EUROPE

Chart

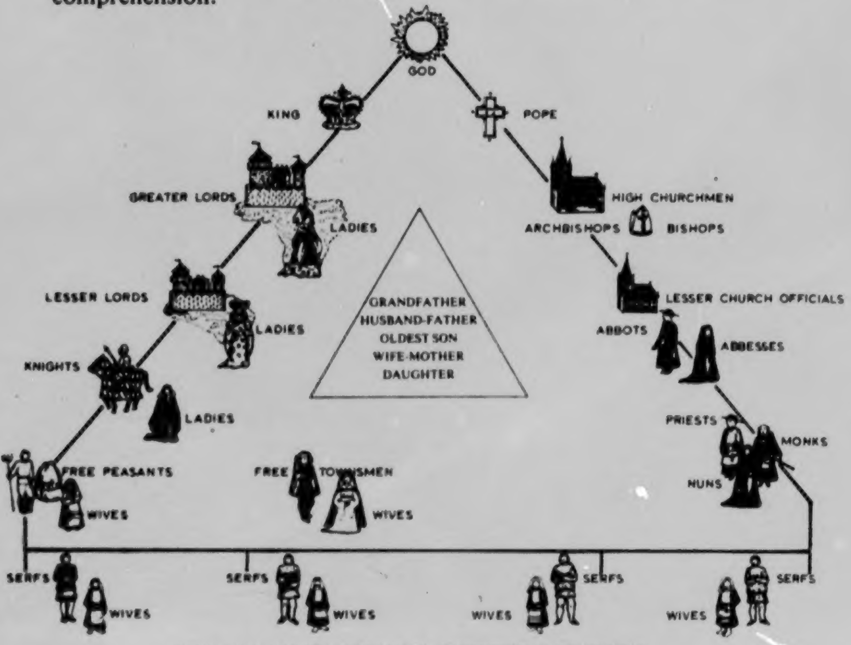
TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The chart activity is intended as a means by which students can visualize the relationships between feudalism and the patriarchal model. The activity enables the teacher to assess student understanding of these concepts and to address the need for further clarification.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Ask students to look at the chart "Feudal Hierarchy in Western Europe."
2. This chart shows the distribution of power during feudal times in Europe. It does not show the proportion of people in each of the two fixed classes, the nobility and the peasantry.
3. Have students fill in the blank chart individually so they can check their understanding of the feudal relationships.

   Students are to use the student worksheet in order to complete the blank chart. Instruct students to write the number and the name on the blank chart. The numbers are important because they give evidence of the student's comprehension.


GOD
KING
POPE
GREATER LORDS
LADIES
HIGH CHURCHMEN
ARCHBISHOPS
BISHOPS
LESSER LORDS
LADIES
GRANDFATHER
HUSBAND-FATHER
OLDEST SON
WIFE-MOTHER
DAUGHTER
LESSER CHURCH OFFICIALS
ABBOTS
ABBESSES
KNIGHTS
LADIES
PRIESTS
MONKS
FREE PEASANTS
WIVES
FREE TOWNSMEN
WIVES
NUNS
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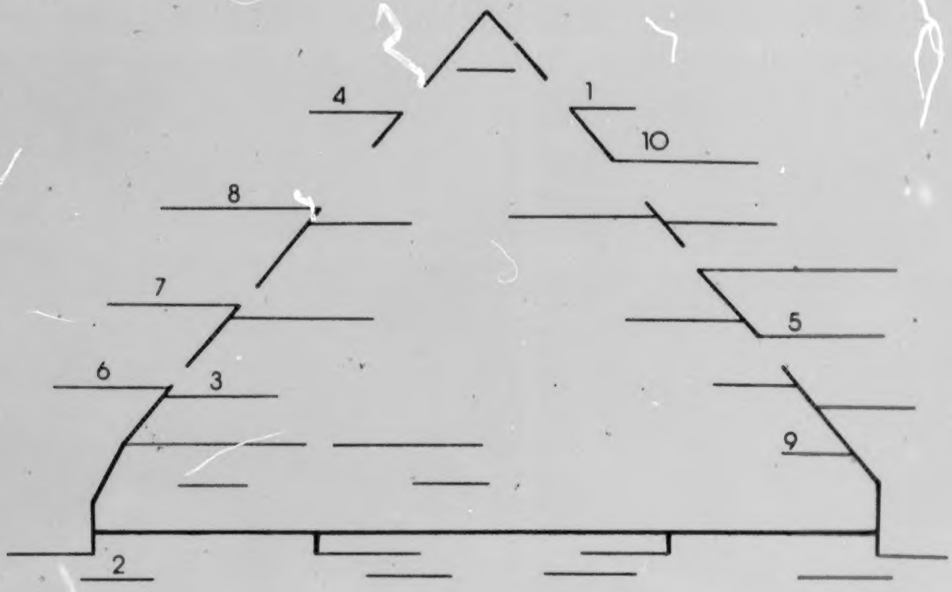
FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN WESTERN EUROPE



FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN WESTERN EUROPE

ANSWERS

1 POPE
2 WIVES OF SERFS
3 LADIES
4 KING
5 ABBESSES
6 KNIGHTS
7 LESSER LORDS
8 GREATER LORDS
9 NUNS
10 HIGH CHURCHMEN

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The following student reading was adapted from the historical novel *The Wife of Martin Guerre*, by Janet Lewis. There are two versions of the adaption included here for the use of the teacher. Although the longer version is more faithful in style and language to the novel, the vocabulary may be difficult for average ninth grade students. All class activities are based on the simplified version. The reading of the original novel, *The Wife of Martin Guerre*, is recommended for the teacher and students who wish to read the entire account.

This story illustrates the effect of patriarchy on an individual woman and her family. It provides students with a glimpse into family life dominated by the belief in the absolute obedience and submission of all members of the family to the patriarch.

The story is based on actual dates and events recorded in the court journals of Toulouse, France. Although these events took place in 1539-1560, the situation was typically feudal in character. The Guerre family lived in an isolated mountainous section of southwestern France near the city of Toulouse. Feudal attitudes here remained strong long after feudalism had waned in other parts of Europe.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

1. Use "Women and Western European Feudalism" as background information to introduce the story.
2. Use information from Teacher Instructions to create a context for the story—the time, the setting, the characters.
3. There are two versions of the story, one simplified and one more sophisticated. Select the appropriate version(s) for your class.
4. Read the story aloud with the class.
5. Summary of activities following the story:
   - Speculation on the fate of Bertrande and her family.
   - Looking for clues to Bertrande's behavior.
   - Writing an ending to the story.
   - Questions for class discussion or written assignment.

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE
Speculation on the Fate of Bertrande and her Family

STUDENT ACTIVITY

A. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion.

This discussion should proceed at a brisk pace. The activity is intended to elicit student reactions to the story.

1. How do you feel about the court's decision?

   Was it fair in Medieval times? In today's life?

   If you were one of the judges, how would you have voted?

   Do you think Arnaud du Tilh deserved death?

2. Why do you think Bertrande pressed charges against such a well-loved man?

3. Where had Martin been all these years? Does he owe his family any explanation for his absence?

B. Working together as a class, ask students to speculate on the fate of Bertrande and her family. List responses on the board and tally them to see if there is a consensus regarding Bertrande's fate.

Use the following questions as a guide to the discussion.

1. What happened to Bertrande after she left the courtroom?

   Did she return home?

   What alternative did she have to returning home?

   If she returned home, how did Martin treat her?

   What was her attitude toward Martin?

2. What happened to Bertrande's son, Sanxi?

   How does he feel about his father now?

   How does he feel about Bertrande who caused his beloved "Martin" to be hanged?

   Will Martin try to win him over?

   How important is Sanxi to Martin?

3. What happened to Bertrande's second son?
   How did Bertrande feel about the impostor's son?
   How did Martin treat this child?
   What would be his chances under the patriarchal system?
4. What happened to the family and the servants in the Guerre house?
   How did they receive Martin?
   How did Martin treat them after they had welcomed the impostor?

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE
Looking for Clues to Explain Bertrande

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

We do not know what actually became of Bertrande or her two sons. Because Bertrande was so devoutly religious, it is unlikely that she committed suicide, which she believed to be a mortal sin. She was already suffering great anguish over the adultery which she had innocently committed and which she and her community considered the greatest sin. Her only salvation according to her belief was to do penance. Therefore, if Martin treated her harshly after his return, that might have been the penance she believed she deserved. Certainly Martin's attitude in the courtroom showed no indication of mercy or forgiveness toward Bertrande.

Bertrande, like the majority of people in feudal Europe, was socialized to believe a patriarchal system was God-given and necessary to the maintenance of order and security. She was the product of a strong religious upbringing and believed implicitly in the teachings of the Christian Church. Any deviation from proper female behavior, she believed, would jeopardize her salvation as well as bring severe punishment or death.

Bertrande accepted unquestioningly her own role as a woman, subservient to the males in her life. She accepted her early marriage and was grateful that it was such a good one. Indeed, she credited her father-in-law, the patriarch, for the sense of security and well-being that she felt in the midst of his household. Very conscious of her own responsibilities as the future mistress, she was proud of being the mother of a son who would inherit the mantle of the patriarch.

As presented in the story, there was little rebellion in her character. She respected the rules of the society by which she lived. Her tragedy was in her belief that she had brought dishonor to the Guerre family.

Although estranged at first, Martin's son, Sanxi, probably was safe with his father. It would be extremely important for Martin, as the patriarch, to protect Sanxi as his heir.

The impostor's child would be considered illegitimate and subject to ill treatment if Martin so decided. He might have been kept on in the household as a servant, or banished to live with strangers. In any case, he probably did not escape suffering the sins of his father.

Looking for clues to explain Bertrande's behavior should enable students to understand the impact of the patriarchal teachings on individual lives. Hopefully, students will empathize with both Bertrande and Martin as they understand the pressures on them from society and the Church.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Explain to students that in this activity they will act as detectives, looking for clues in the story which explain in all probability why Bertrande acted as she did and what may have happened to her. Clues consist of events in Bertrande's life which taught her important lessons of what was expected behavior for a woman in her community.
2. Working as a class, find three clues in the first paragraph which describe three customs Bertrande had learned even as a child. The clues are as follows:
   a. She learns she is betrothed as an infant.
   b. She is to be married at the age of eleven.
   c. Her marriage is arranged in the interests of the two families.
3. Instruct students to proceed on their own, working paragraph by paragraph to find further clues to explain Bertrande's behavior. Students are to use the worksheet, "Looking for Clues" for this assignment.

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE
Looking for Clues

ANSWER SHEET

Paragraph 2	The wedding, even the festivities, have little to do with Bertrande and Martin. They are only symbols of an economic arrangement between families.
Paragraph 3	As the patriarch, her father-in-law has absolute power over Bertrande's life as well as her husband's.

Paragraph 4	Bertrande left her father's home forever, to become a working member of a new household.
Paragraph 5	Bertrande had an important share in the economy of the household.
Paragraph 6	The absolute power of her father-in-law as the patriarch brought security to the family.
Paragraph 7	All members of the family recognize the need for obedience to the patriarch. Martin's father punishes him severely and his mother explains.
Paragraph 8	The birth of a son earns Bertrande additional respect in the family.
Paragraph 9	As mistress of the household, Bertrande has added responsibilities for feeding and clothing the family.
Paragraph 10	Martin left home because he was afraid of the patriarch's anger.
Paragraph 11	Martin would be free only at his father's death.
Paragraph 12	Bertrande could not criticize her husband even if he had deserted her.
Paragraph 13	Bertrande assumes the duties of mistress of the household and supervises the servants and young family members.
Paragraph 14	Uncle Pierre comes to live in Bertrande's house as the patriarch of the family, providing necessary security to the family.

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE
Writing an Ending to the Story

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Ask students to write an ending to the story, using the clues they have discovered to the rules by which Bertrande and Martin lived.
2. Ask students to share their story endings. Compare them with the earlier speculations. Is there evidence of greater understanding of the influence of the patriarchal teachings of the society and the Church? Have students empathized with Bertrande? With Martin?

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE
Summary

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The following questions can be used by the teacher as a summary lesson for reading and the follow-up activities. Using class discussion or a written assignment, the teacher can select from the questions those which emphasize the concepts outlined at the beginning of the section:

1. How patriarchy affected the lives of European feudal women
2. Women as workers under the feudal system

QUESTIONS for class discussion or written assignment

1. Why were children expected to marry at such an early age? Who benefited from their marriage?
2. Do you think Bertrande or Martin were surprised when they were told about the wedding plans? How would their reactions differ from those of eleven-year-olds today? Why? Where could they have learned what to expect?
3. Why was her father-in-law more important to Bertrande on her wedding than her husband? What does that show about her understanding of her role as a wife?
4. Did Bertrande have an important role in the household? What were her responsibilities?
5. Was Bertrande unhappy in her new household? How did she feel about her father-in-law? How did her status in the family change after the birth of her son? Why?
6. How did Martin feel about his father's hitting him? Would modern boys react in the same way? How would you feel?
7. Do you think Martin planned to stay away from home for such a long time? What were his reasons for leaving?
8. How did Bertrande hope the priest would help her? How did she feel when he refused to help her?

WOMEN AS WORKERS

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In spite of this low status in the patriarchal hierarchy, women were essential to the feudal economy as producers. Women at every social level were partners with their husbands in the production of food, clothing, and shelter.

With the development of towns came a shift in the economic life under feudalism and a shift in the roles women played. In addition to being in partnerships with husbands, women became independent businesswomen, sometimes carrying on two or three trades at the same time. Women were engaged in a variety of productive work, some of which would be considered nontraditional for women today.

In spite of the somewhat freer life in the towns, however, women were still severely restricted by patriarchal attitudes and practices. The male bourgeoisie, who fought so bravely against feudal laws which restricted commercial efforts, continued to cherish the patriarchal values of feudalism.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Have students read "Women in the Economy of Feudal Europe."
2. Ask questions to look at the chart "Feudal Hierarchy in Western Europe." Where is the townsman? Is he a vassal of a lord? To whom does the townswoman owe obedience? Are townspeople really part of the feudal hierarchy?

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways were women producers in the feudal economy?

   In the country? ___________

   In the cities? ___________

2. In what ways was life for a townswoman different from Bertrande's life on the farm?
3. What evidence is there that patriarchy still existed even in the towns?

WOMEN AS WORKERS
Illustration of Women Workers in the Towns of Europe

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

This activity can be done orally as a class, or individually, using the student worksheet.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Have students study the illustration first.

1. How does this scene contrast with the description of Bertrande's farm? What are the differences in the physical environment?
2. What are the varieties of trade engaged in by women?

   Either list the trades on the board as the students respond, or ask them to list them on their worksheets.

   blacksmith
   weaver
   spinner
   midwife
   healer
   goldsmith
   seamstress
   retailer of: bread, ale, shoes, food candles
   glover
   baker
   innkeeper
   butcher

3. These names were found on medieval town records. Ask students to guess what each of these women did for a living.

   Dolly Brewster (brewing)
   Mary Spinster (spinning)
   Ruth Webster (weaving)
   Martha Chandler (candle making)
   Hannah Smith (blacksmithing)

   Students can look in the dictionary for additional name derivations.

WOMEN AS RESISTERS

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Women in Europe resisted feudal patriarchy in a number of ways. It is not unusual to find stories and songs about women who defied the authorities, spoke out to their husbands, and led lives apart from the normal expectations of women. Teachers may remember the fiery-tongued Wife of Bath from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* as a humorous example of resistance to the patriarchal control of husbands.

The women who joined the Beguine movement, or those women whose way of life resulted in their being labeled witch, may also be seen as resisters.

In the reading of Christine de Pisan, students will meet a woman who does not represent the resistance of the common woman, but whose writing expressed the yearning of many women for the right to an education and intellectual fulfillment. Christine is an exception because she did receive an education and found a way to support herself through her writings—Europe's first woman to do so. It is important for students to learn about her view of the potential for women, which was in sharp disagreement with the prevailing beliefs about women. Some people have called Christine the first forerunner of the modern women's movement.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Assign the reading.
2. Have class complete the question sheet on the reading.

   Where would Christine belong on the chart of Feudal Hierarchy?

   How did Christine support herself and her children?

   What did Christine want for all women?

   Why did her mother object to her education?

   List the ways her childhood was different from the average girl of feudal times.

   What was the theme of her most famous book?
3. Research topics for written or oral assignment: find out about the Wife of Bath and the Beguines. How did they resist feudal patriarchy?

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The essay, "Feudalism in China," provides the background information for the teacher. It is not a comprehensive discussion of Chinese feudalism. Rather, this essay indicates that essentially the feudal system of China was parallel in concept to that of Europe. The focus on the need for order in society as achieved through hierarchy and patriarchy, both in the family and the community, is the common thread for comparison of the two systems.

The teacher should introduce this section with the information from the essay, as well as incorporate this material into the activities that follow.

A. IMPORTANT CONCEPTS and words to be emphasized

feudalism
harmony
hierarchy
patriarchy
Confucius

B. SPECIFIC POINTS to be made in this essay are

1. The Chinese feudal system was similar to that of Europe in that a patriarchy of family and social relationships was the means to achieve order and harmony in society.
2. The Confucian model for family relationships was the model for feudal society in China.
3. At the top of the feudal hierarchy was the emperor, to whom all other groups owed respect.
4. At the top of the family hierarchy was the patriarch, to whom all family members owed respect.
5. Behavior reflecting one's place in the social and family hierarchy was extremely important, especially the behavior of inferiors to superiors.

FEUDALISM IN CHINA
Teacher Background

Chinese feudalism resembled, in many respects, the feudalism of Europe. The proof of its ability to order and maintain society is its 2,000 years of continuous history. It was essentially a system of political, economic and social relationships based on land tenure.

Land was not bought and sold as it is today. Land was not a commodity. However, it was the basis of wealth in that it provided the food, shelter, and clothing that was needed for survival.

The landlord was lord over the land and its produce. However, 95% of the people were peasants. It was the peasants who worked the land and produced the wealth. They too were considered part of the landlord's domain and were under his protection. In return for protection and use of the land, the peasants owed their landlord as much as 80% of their produce.

The landlord also entered into a series of obligatory relationships with the mandarin scholars who operated as part of the larger government bureaucracy. Ultimately, the landlord owed allegiance to the emperor himself. These relationships parallel similar land tenure and political relationships in Europe and other parts of the world where feudalism also developed. However, the Chinese administered centralized feudal authority through a secular bureaucracy.

Chinese feudalism existed without the support of a religious institution. Instead, it relied on the teachings of several famous philosophers to legitimize its power. The most famous of these philosophers was Confucius. Confucius wrote in the 5th century B.C. at about the same time as Plato and Aristotle in Greece, and Buddha in India. Ironically, Chinese feudalism was not yet established during his time. Later, however, his writings, especially those having to do with political and legal order and personal conduct, became the official dogma of the feudal Chinese court. And, as in Europe, the dogma became not a way of looking at and understanding the world, but a world unto itself. Intellectuals debated over Confucian writings in much the same way that European theologians debated how many angels could dance on the head of a pin.

The hierarchical system of feudal patriarchy was perpetuated by the simple device of inheritance of class standing through the men. Along with class came all the duties and obligations of that class, and within each family came the reproduction of those duties and obligations of lower to higher, younger to older, and female to male. Harmony was based on each person knowing and acting according to all these duties and obligations. Everyone knew his/her place and was expected to remain in it, not only to satisfy the present harmony but to assure the harmony of future generations as well.

To maintain this order, the last resort was force. To this end, the emperor maintained a large army. In addition, each landlord could raise his own armed force by forcibly recruiting his peasants. Within the family, too, those in authority could use force, including a husband against his wife or an older person against a younger person provided that no blood was drawn.

In this way, China remained in its feudal way of life for 2,000 years. It is interesting to note, however, that the legal, moral, and armed force of feudal dogma became more rigid as feudalism began to decay after the 17th century. As the pressure from industrializing nations came to bear, China modernized only her wealthy cities, while retaining her feudal roots, and became increasingly oppressive in the control of her subjects. Consequently, as China entered the modern era, the lower classes, and especially the women of the lower classes, suffered a dark nightmare of subjugation and humiliation.

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA
Women in the Chinese Patriarchy

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of the essay "Women in the Chinese Patriarchy," is to provide the teacher and student with information on how patriarchy affected the lives of Chinese feudal women.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Teacher introduces "Women in the Chinese Patriarchy."
2. Have students read the essay. This can be an assigned reading, or the reading can be done aloud in class.
3. If the essay is read aloud in class, review the words listed under "Important Concepts" in the course of the activity.
4. Follow the same procedure with the ideas listed above under "Specific Points."
5. If the essay is an assigned reading, review the terms and points for discussion in class after the assignment has been completed.

A. **IMPORTANT CONCEPTS** and words to be emphasized

the three obediences
mother-in-law
bound feet
ancestral

deference
concubine*
male heir

B. **SPECIFIC POINTS** to facilitate class discussion

1. The Confucian concept that women are the cause of disorder and disharmony in society, thereby necessitating male domination.
2. Marriage as the only honorable state for women.
3. The importance of bearing a male heir, in order that women maintain status and protection.
4. The implications of a married woman's position should she fail to bear a male child.
5. The necessity of "weakening" women (foot binding) since they are a major cause of disharmony.

**Note:* Discussion of this topic rests with the discretion of the teacher. If the teacher elects to discuss concubinage, a distinction should be made between a concubine, a courtesan and a prostitute. A concubine became a part of the household as a secondary wife. She could achieve status through the children she had.

WOMEN IN THE CHINESE PATRIARCHY

> *How sad it is to be a woman!*
> *Nothing on earth is held so cheap.*
> *Boys stand leaning at the door*
> *Like Gods fallen out of heaven.*
> *Their hearts brave the Four Oceans,*
> *The wind and dust of a thousand miles.*
> *No one is glad when a girl is born;*
> *By her the family sets no store.*
>
> Fu Hsuan

In terms of the conditions of women in Chinese feudalism, the most important writings by Confucius had to do with the systems of obligation and women's place. A woman's place was always in relationship to a man and the class standing of his family. Every woman was obligated to a man in her family, whether father, husband or son. Those of the upper classes could at least enjoy deference from people of the lower class, the peasantry. But the majority of women in feudal China were the lowest of the low. There was no one who owed anything to or was obligated to a peasant wife or daughter.

WIVES

Confucius maintained that it was a law of nature that women should be held under the domination of men since women were the source of disorder and disruption of the harmony of the community. They needed the guidance and control of men in order to keep them out of mischief. According to Confucian teachings, a woman's entire life should be organized around three obediences:

> As a girl, she must obey her father.
> As a wife, she must obey her husband.
> As a widow, she must obey her son.

The only honorable state for women was marriage and their chief role was as the mothers of male heirs. The worst sin any woman could commit was to fail to produce a boy child. In such a case, she could be returned to her parents and the marriage would be annulled, or her husband would take a second wife in the hope of having a son. If her husband died, she could not remarry. Even if she had been betrothed to her husband as a child and they had never lived together as husband and wife, she was considered a widow and was supposed to live with and serve his parents.

BRIDES

A young unmarried daughter was only a temporary member of the family group, remaining at home only long enough to become of marriageable age or condition. She lost her family name when she left her parents' home. Often the young wife was unable to return to visit her own family after her marriage. She came to her husband's home a stranger, and she remained a stranger until the birth of a child, preferably a male. At this event, she was accorded more respect by her husband's family, but she remained under the domination of her mother-in-law. When any dispute arose between her and her mother-in-law, her husband was supposed to take his mother's side.

For poor Chinese families, marrying off daughters was at once a liability and an asset. The family lost the daughter's services, but usually received some kind of "bride price," in money or goods. The poorest peasants sometimes were forced to sell their daughters as slaves or concubines.

Girls were sometimes married off at an early age to men fifteen or twenty years older than they. On the other hand, a girl might be betrothed or married to an infant or a very small child so that she could be a servant in her husband's home for years before he was mature. At the marriage ceremony, the bride was supposed to crawl under a saddle to show her willingness to work like a beast until she died.

As a mother-in-law, the Asian woman enjoyed more power than at any other time in her life.

> *As a compensation for [their] lack of power outside the home [genteel Chinese ladies] came to wield great power inside the home. Theoretically, the men were the heads of the families; but in nearly every Chinese house, the real head was the "Dowager Mother"—the oldest living woman on the male side of the line. Out of respect to her the men of the family gave in to her wishes, going against her wishes only in moments of extreme seriousness. As for the rest of the family, all the wives, children, and servants were expected to defer to her as a queen.*[1]

Even then, she never achieved a position of economic independence. Although she issued household orders, she was still under the domination of her husband or her eldest son. Even though her labor was essential to the family, she was not economically independent. How she behaved toward her daughters-in-law usually depended on how she had been treated as a bride in the same household. Women waited eagerly for this period and the opportunity to exert some authority. Thus, the system was continued for generations.

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[1] *My Revolutionary Years: The Autobiography of Madame Wei Tao-Ming*, Wei Yu-Hsin, Charles Scribner & Sons, 1943, p. 139.

FOOT BINDING

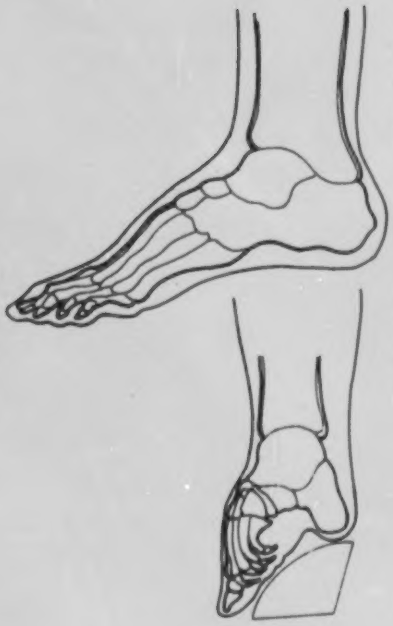
The bound feet of the women of China were symbolic of men's distrust of women. It was felt that women must be kept restricted since they might disrupt the harmony of the community.

From the 10th century through the early years of the 20th century, women in the middle and upper classes were expected to bind their feet. Bound feet became a status symbol proving that upper-class women had no need to move about because they had servants to do their work. Lower-class women had their feet bound in hope of marriage into a wealthy family and because it was fashionable.

The origin of the custom is not known, but it was a painful and crippling process. At about five years of age, a little girl's feet were wrapped in yards of cotton cloth so that the four small toes were bent under toward the sole of the foot.

If the bones did not bend enough by pressure, the bones were broken to force the foot into a pointed shape. This was considered very beautiful by the Chinese male. It was a sex symbol. Men looked at a woman's feet, not at her face, to judge her beauty.

The bound feet crippled her so that she could only hobble around the house. The result of this custom was that women became helpless.



> *Feet are bound not to make them beautiful as a curved bow,*
> *But to restrain women when they go out of doors.*
>
> Old Chinese proverb

LACK OF AN EDUCATION

According to Confucius, woman's virtue lay in a lack of education. Consequently, girls generally did not share with boys in the same opportunities for learning. Peasant girls learned only household skills so that they could make a good marriage. Pan Ch'ao, the most famous woman scholar of China, believed that girls should be educated. The daughter of an eminent scholar, she had been given an extraordinary education. Since there were no books for girls, she wrote one called *Lessons for Women.* These were rules to help young girls strengthen their character and guide their behavior. Pan Ch'ao was no rebel. Her lessons were based on Confucian teachings, which kept women in the inferior position. She said that all women should try to develop these four virtues:

- Womanly virtue—know your place, be modest, always be last.
- Womanly words—do not speak too much or in coarse language.
- Womanly bearing—always appear attractive for your husband.
- Womanly work—do your household chores neatly and quickly.

If a woman followed these rules, she would be a perfect wife and mother. So said Pan Ch'ao. And so said Confucian scholars. There was no question these were the roles every woman was expected to fulfill.

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA
Feudal Hierarchy in China
Chart

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

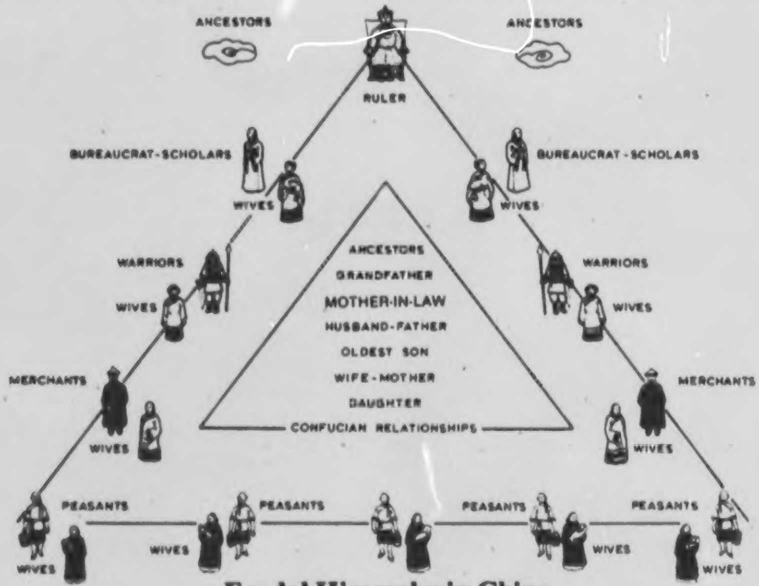
1. Ask students to study the chart.
2. Recall the features of the chart on *Feudal Hierarchy in Western Europe*. Discuss some similarities and differences between the hierarchies of Europe and China. Examples:

   Some Similarities:

   - Lowest and largest group is peasants.
   - Chinese Warrior class and European knights have approximately same status.
   - Wives are in subservient role in both hierarchies.

   Some Differences:

   - Head of hierarchy in Chinese culture is the ruler, not God.
   - Ancestors are worshipped in Chinese culture.
   - The support to the feudal hierarchy is derived from the Confucian Code of Family Relationships, not from a religious institution.
3. Have students answer questions relating to the chart on the worksheet provided.


ANCESTORS
ANCESTORS
RULER
BUREAUCRAT-SCHOLARS
BUREAUCRAT-SCHOLARS
WIVES
WIVES
WARRIORS
WARRIORS
WIVES
WIVES
MERCHANTS
MERCHANTS
WIVES
WIVES
ANCESTORS
GRANDFATHER
MOTHER-IN-LAW
HUSBAND-FATHER
OLDEST SON
WIFE-MOTHER
DAUGHTER
CONFUCIAN RELATIONSHIPS
PEASANTS
PEASANTS
PEASANTS
PEASANTS
WIVES
WIVES
WIVES
WIVES

Feudal Hierarchy in China

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA
Ah Ao

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this story, women are seen as a threat to the patriarchal rule of the community. As with the story of Bertrande (see Women of Feudal Western Europe section), marriage is the focus of this story. Correct conduct as a wife is an index of correct behavior for the feudal woman. Incorrect conduct is seen as a sin against patriarchy. A double standard for men and women prevails. Women, the major source of disharmony in society, must be strictly judged and punished if order is to prevail in the family and the society.

"Ah Ao" is a story that could have taken place any time in China from ancient times before Christ up through the first two decades of the 20th century. The setting is a village somewhere in the Chinese countryside far from any large city. There are only seven houses in the village, and the poorest one belongs to Widow Wang. Actually, only half of the house belongs to her because she had to mortgage half of it to pay for her husband's funeral. Widow Wang lives in the rear of the house with her son, Small One Brother, and her daughter, Ah Ao.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the story by explaining that the purpose of this activity is to understand how patriarchy affected the lives of Chinese feudal women. Ah Ao and Widow Wang are the women on whom the story is focused. Explain the setting for the story and the characters.
2. Ask students to look for evidence,
    - that men had a position of power in this community
    - that a woman had very low status in the community
3. Ask the students to read the story silently.
4. Ask students, when finished reading, to answer the questions on the student worksheet.
5. Discuss the worksheet with the class.
6. Ask students to make a comparison of the story "Ah Ao" with "The Wife of Martin Guerre," by discussing the following questions:
    - In what ways are these two stories similar?
    - How do Bertrande and Ah Ao differ in their behavior?
    - As a result of their behavior, is the outcome for each the same?
    - Compare the behavior of Martin Guerre and that of Ah Ao's lover.

      How did each behave under stress?

      What attitude toward women did each exhibit?

7. **Assign students to write a brief ending to the story of Ah Ao. Have them refer to the reading "Women in the Chinese Patriarchy" for factual evidence to support their endings. Students should use the worksheet provided for this activity.**

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA
Chinese Characters Tell a Story

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The Chinese characters in this activity illustrate how the patriarchal attitudes toward women were incorporated into language. By combining the Chinese symbol for woman with other symbols, formers of the language clearly delineated women's roles. Students will be able to see how words can be used to define what is good and bad in a woman and to identify women with particular roles such as housewife or mother and with certain personality traits such as goodness or jealousy.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Have students look at the column of Chinese characters on the student worksheet.
2. Explain to the students that some Chinese words are formed by combining two characters to make a new compound word.
3. Ask the students which character is repeated in all but one of the compound characters.

   Answer: 女
4. Then, one by one, write the English translation of each compound character on the board (woman, good, wife, harmony, etc.).
5. Ask the students to guess what additional word has been joined with "woman" to form the compound character.

   Example: *Male child + woman = good*
6. Finally, after revealing the correct answers (good = woman with a male child, wife = woman with a broom, etc.), ask the students to copy the translations next to the characters on their worksheets.
7. Discuss with the class the attitudes toward women they find revealed in the language.
8. Show the characters below to the students to emphasize the difference in status between the sexes in China.

人	**MAN**	大	**GREAT (MAN WITH ARMS OUTSTRETCHED)**
天	**SKY**	夫	**RULER (GREATER THAN THE SKY)**

9. Conclude by asking students to identify words in English which carry similar associations or characteristics for males and females.

女 **WOMAN** 好 **GOOD (WOMAN WITH A MALE CHILD)**

妻 **WIFE (WOMAN WITH A BROOM)**

MARRIAGE (WOMAN ATTACHED TO A HOUSE) 嫁

安 **HARMONY (WOMAN IN THE HOME)**

嫉 **JEALOUSY (SICKNESS OF A WOMAN)**

毒 **CRUEL, MALICIOUS (MOTHER WHO ACTS LIKE A RULER)**

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA
Women as Workers

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this activity is to focus student attention on the roles played by women workers in feudal China. As background information explain to students that although women could not achieve economic independence in feudal China, they exercised their power as mothers-in-law, and as producers of family necessities.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES

1. Using the background information above and the student reading "Women in the Chinese Patriarchy," introduce the essay, "Women as Workers."
2. Have students read the essay aloud.
3. Instruct students to complete the worksheets, working individually.
4. Discuss the worksheet with the class.

WOMEN OF FEUDAL CHINA
Women as Resisters

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this section is to discuss the ways in which Chinese women resisted their traditional roles.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since Chinese women were not usually allowed to work outside the home, the ways in which they resisted the restrictions of feudal patriarchy were primarily on an individual level. For example, traditional stories use as a theme the Chinese woman's verbal ability as a way of maintaining some minimal control over her life within the structure of the patriarchal family. "Sharp-tongued women" are often found in the literature of feudal China. A kind of mystical power is sometimes attributed to them, against which others tried to guard themselves.

The following story is a legend based on the life of a real woman. Hua Mu Lan, the heroine, was a member of the upper class. She was trained not only in female traditional arts but in martial arts as well. Her daring exploits provide a model heroine for Chinese women. This story has been a popular one in Chinese literature for centuries.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the story to the students by using the background information.
2. Have students read the story silently and answer questions on the worksheet provided.
3. Discuss with the class the significance of Hua Mu Lan's behavior in a patriarchal feudal society.
    - How does her behavior conform to traditional roles of women? How does her behavior challenge the traditional roles of women?
    - Why was Hua Mu Lan a popular figure?
    - How did Hua Mu Lan's education differ from that of most Chinese girls?
    - Did the fact that Hua Mu Lan was from the upper class affect her ability to behave in a nontraditional way?

CULTURAL COMPARISONS: WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The activities in this section are developed to provide students with information on the following concepts:

1. The commonalities and differences in the ways women resisted feudal patriarchy in both societies.
2. The commonalities and differences in roles played by women in both societies.
3. The present-day attitudes and practices relating to women which stem from feudal patriarchy.

CULTURAL COMPARISONS: WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA

Codes of Conduct

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this activity is to focus attention on the commonalities and differences in the patriarchal attitudes and customs of feudal Europe and China.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

A. Activity One

1. Have the students look back at the two charts: "Feudal Hierarchy in Western Europe" and "Feudal Hierarchy in China."
2. Discussion questions for comparison.
    a. Discuss the similarities and differences between the feudal hierarchy in Western Europe and China.
    b. In what ways is the position of women the same in China and Western Europe?

B. Activity Two

1. Introduce the student readings, "Letter to a Daughter in Feudal Europe" and "Letter from a Chinese Mother," by explaining the comparative nature of the activity.
2. Divide the class into two groups. Give one group copies of "Letter to a Daughter" and the other group copies of "Letter from a Chinese Mother." (This activity could be conducted as well with four groups—two smaller groups working on the same reading but developing a different poster.)
3. Each group has 20 minutes to read the student reading and to prepare a large poster to exhibit to the class. Each poster will represent a brief summary of the student reading in the form of a code of conduct. The writing should be in large letters so that the poster can be easily read.
4. Arrange the posters so that the class can read them.
5. Ask students to identify the common features between the two codes. Discuss what is *similar* about the rules of behavior expected of women. List on the board.
6. What are the differences? List on the board.
7. Looking at the two codes of conduct, have students pick out the elements that are illustrative of patriarchies. Then ask students to identify the elements that are illustrative of hierarchies.
8. Summarize by discussing how these codes reveal the basic ingredients of a patriarchal system and of a hierarchal system.

CULTURAL COMPARISONS: WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA

Women as Workers

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this activity is to focus attention on the commonalities and differences in the roles played by women workers in feudal Europe and China.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Begin this activity with a brief discussion in which students recall, with the teacher's assistance, the kinds of work roles women played in Europe and China. This activity draws upon the information students received in the previous sections, Women of Feudal Western Europe and Women of Feudal China.

2. Make a chart on the board with two columns labeled *Feudal Europe* and *Feudal China*. Have students make lists under the columns in answer to the following questions.
   a. What was the *primary* work women did? (*Example:* bear male heirs.)
   b. How did women contribute to the survival of their families? (*Example* made their clothes.)
   c. What work did women do outside the home? (*Example:* midwifery.)

3. After students make this list, discuss the differences and similarities between them.
   a. Review the similarities across categories.
   b. Are there any differences between the kinds of work women did in feudal Europe and feudal China?
   c. Are there any differences between the work women did and the work men did in these societies?
   d. Are there any similarities and/or differences between the work done by women in these feudal societies and that of women in contemporary American society?
   e. Speculate on the reasons for the differences discussed in questions b, c, d above.

CULTURAL COMPARISONS: WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA

Women Resisters in Feudal Europe and China

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this section is to identify the commonalities and differences in the ways women resisted feudal patriarchy in Western Europe and China.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. As a class, have the students suggest the ways Hua Mu Lan and Christine de Pisan differed from the average woman described in the feudal codes of patriarchy.

   Example:

Hua Mu Lan	**Christine de Pisan**
Learned martial arts	Educated as a scholar
Fought in the army	Supported her family by writing
Disguised herself as a man	Wrote about problems of women
Traveled and lived away from home	Associated with men writers
	Believed in potential of *all* women

2. Discussion questions

   a. In comparing Hua Mu Lan with Christine de Pisan, which woman tried to change society's attitudes toward women and their potential as individuals?

   b. Which woman acted in a way more acceptable to society? (Would society understand a woman who took up arms to defend her country more easily than one who took up a pen to attack time-honored beliefs?)

   c. How do you think the differences between the work that women in Europe and China were allowed to do affected their ability to become resisters?

   d. Compare the risks that women in feudal Europe and in feudal China took if they attempted to resist. Does class status make a difference?

CULTURAL COMPARISONS: WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA

Contemporary Aspects

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of these activities is to identify the present-day attitudes and practices relating to women which stem from feudal patriarchy.

The teacher should select from the following activities those (s)he considers most appropriate for summarizing this unit and relating the concepts to the present.

A. Activity One

1. Refer the class to the "Codes of Conduct" posters. Ask students to consider this question: "Suppose your mother were writing you a letter on the eve of your marriage. What suggestions would she make to you about having a good marriage? What codes of conduct would she suggest?"

   Procedure

   Write a letter based on what your parents expect of you now. For example:

   - What chores are expected of you? Same for sisters, brothers?
   - Is school important for your future? Same for brothers, sisters?
   - How are you expected to dress? Same for brothers, sisters?
   - How are you expected to act? Same for brothers, sisters?

2. Using the letters, discuss similarities and differences of letters girls have written and boys have written.
3. Homework assignment: "Ask your mother and father what behavior they think their parents expected of them in their marriage.

   Note: This activity could be expanded into an oral history exercise. Students would write out questions for the interview and then report on the results of the interview.

B. Activity Two

Assign students to do research and report on one of the following topics.

1. Contemporary counterparts of Christine de Pisan and/or Hua Mu Lan.

   [Note: books with material on Chinese women are:

   Portraits of Chinese Women in Revolution, Agnes Smedley
   New Women in New China, Peking Foreign Languages Press.
   The Seeds and Other Stories, Peking Foreign Languages Press.
   Women Hold Up Half the Sky, Berkeley Yenan Books.*]*

2. A woman of Western Europe who deals with the vestiges of feudalism that block woman's growth in society today. (Examples: Simone de Beauvoir, Melina Mercouri.)
3. A Chinese woman who deals with the vestiges of feudalism that block woman's growth in society today.
4. An American woman who deals with the vestiges of feudalism in American society today.

   Note: A variation on this activity would be to organize a debate after students have done their research. The topic: Are there vestiges of feudalism in American society today?

C. Activity Three

Working in groups, have students make charts, similar to the feudal hierarchy charts of Western Europe and China used in this unit. The charts should reflect the way the students view the organization of contemporary society. For example, begin with the President and the First Lady. Do they belong at the top?

As students share the group charts, observe the organizational models the students have designed. Are there hierarchies? What possibilities do students see for the achievement of equality between men and women in American society?

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See section on Goldflower, true story of a young woman who experienced adolescence and marriage under Asian patriarchy. Very appealing to young people.

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Collection of stories from Asia, Africa and Latin America, all relating to the lives of ordinary women. High literary quality, representing some of the best authors from Third World countries.

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FOR TEACHERS

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UNIT 1

Women under Feudalism in Western Europe and China

WOMEN UNDER FEUDALISM IN WESTERN EUROPE AND CHINA
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DEFINITION OF TERMS

TERMS YOU NEED TO KNOW

PATRIARCHY

Patri means father. *Arch* means rule by. *Patriarchy* means *rule by the father*. Patriarchy is a method for structuring society. Patriarchy uses the family as a model. The patriarchal family model looks like a pyramid:

- The oldest male, grandfather or father, is the head of the family, or *patriarch*. His rule is law. He is at the top.
- The oldest son is the next person in power. He will inherit any family property from his father.
- Next to the bottom is the wife.
- At the bottom of the pyramid is the daughter.

This family structure is a hierarchy. Men are at the top. They have superiority. Women are placed in lower positions. As inferiors, it is important that their behavior toward their superiors is correct. We said that patriarchy is a method for structuring society. This means that all family members have positions on the family pyramid, and within the pyramid of society as well.

Who do you think is a likely candidate for patriarch of feudal society in Western Europe? in China?

Where do you think women are positioned on the society pyramid?

HIERARCHY

A *hierarchy* is a system of ranking people from lower to higher in importance. The work people do and the compensation they receive depend on their place in the hierarchy. In government and business today, there are hierarchies of jobs and salaries. In the feudal hierarchies of Europe and Asia, 95% of the population, as peasants, was at the lower levels.

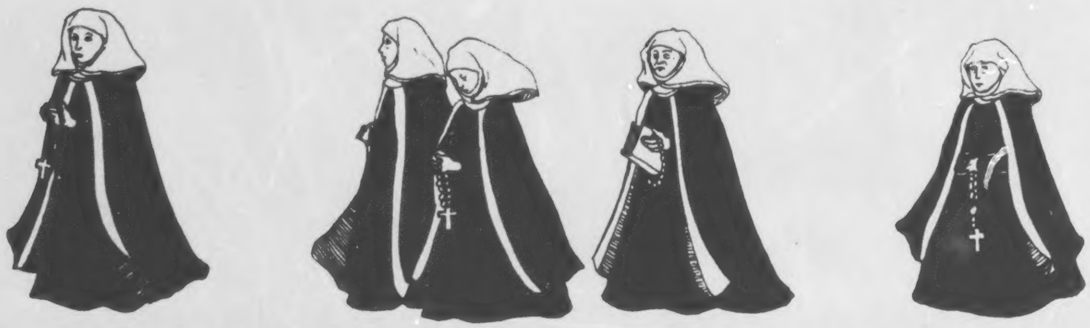
There were *two fixed classes* under feudalism, the *nobility* who owned the land, and the *peasants* who worked the land. No matter what their class, *women* were considered inferior to men, although *upper-class women had more rights than peasant men.* Even in the family, *women* always had lesser authority.

Hierarchy is a way of organizing groups of people so that the many are seen as less worthy than the few.

FEUDALISM

Under feudalism there are two *classes* of people: the *nobility* and the *peasants.* The nobility have immense *power* and wealth because they have seized control of the *land*. They are the *landowners*. The nobility extract *services* from people by their control of the land. They exchange land with *knights* in return for *military service*. Peasants work the land for the nobility; in return they are allowed to live on the land. In Western Europe, the *Catholic Church* is one of the biggest feudal landowners. In China, the emperor is at the top of the social pyramid.

Feudalism is a kind of *patriarchy*. Feudal society was organized as a *hierarchy*.



EUROPEAN SAYINGS

Woman's authority is nil.

The female is more imperfect than the male.

For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

If you have a female child, "set her to sewing and not to reading . . ."
Paolo da Certaldo, *Handbook of Good Customs*, circa 1360, p. 169

. . . idleness is a great danger to both man and woman, but more to the woman

CHINESE SAYINGS

If women sow, the seeds won't grow.

Never trust a woman, even though she has given you ten sons.

If women enter the stable, the draft animals won't prosper.

Marry a man if you want food and clothes.

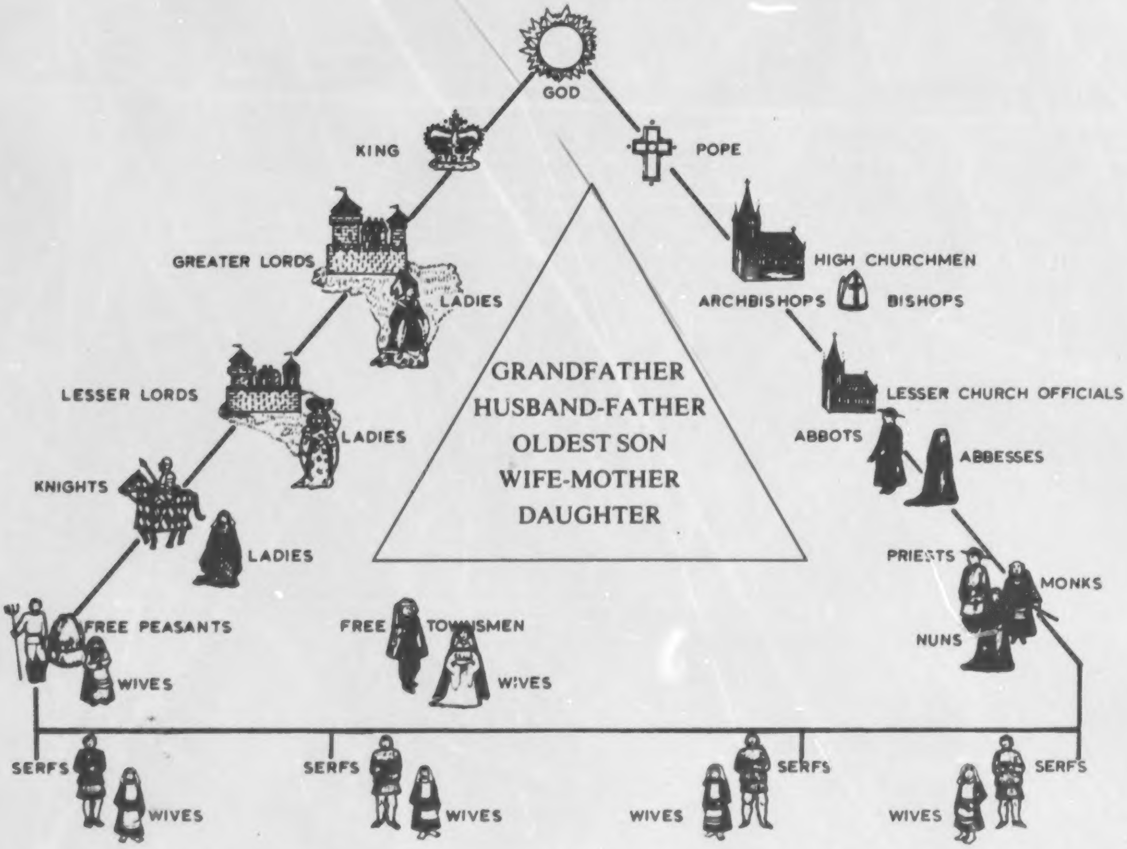
Women are as useful as a deaf ear.

Women have long hair but short ideas.

FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN WESTERN EUROPE

CHART

The picture shows which people had *power* during feudal times. For everyone in feudal Europe, God was the *highest* authority. On each level, *men* were *closer to God*. Therefore men had *more power than women*.


GOD
KING
POPE
GREATER LORDS
LADIES
HIGH CHURCHMEN
ARCHBISHOPS
BISHOPS
LESSER LORDS
LADIES
LESSER CHURCH OFFICIALS
ABBOTS
ABBESSES
KNIGHTS
LADIES
GRANDFATHER
HUSBAND-FATHER
OLDEST SON
WIFE-MOTHER
DAUGHTER
PRIESTS
MONKS
NUNS
FREE PEASANTS
WIVES
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FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN WESTERN EUROPE

Read the descriptions of the people below and see if you can place them by *NUMBER* and *NAME* on the blank chart.

1. **The highest religious official.**
2. **The lowest men on the chart are serfs. Who takes orders from them?**
3. **Ladies who owe absolute obedience to knights.**
4. **The highest feudal authority who sometimes fought with the Pope for power.**
5. **The highest women officials of the Church.**
6. **Warriors who made up the armies of their lords. Show by an arrow where their loyalty belonged.**
7. **Men who also owned land, but owed their loyalty as vassals to the greater lords.**
8. **The king depended on these people when he fought other kings.**
9. **Women who chose to escape from marriage and the absolute rule of husbands or fathers.**
10. **Religious officials who owned as much land and power as the greater lords.**
11. **This chart does not show the real proportion of the population on each level. Check with your text to get the correct percentages for the two fixed classes under feudalism. On the diagram below, write the *name* of *each class* and what *percentage* of the *population* it represented.**

____________ = ____________% of population

____________ = ____________% of population

THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE

AN ADAPTATION*

Bertrande and Martin[1] are eleven years old and it is their wedding day. They are not, however, childhood sweethearts hopelessly in love. On the contrary, they have never spoken to each other. They had no part in choosing one another. Their union is adult business, beginning with the betrothal when the two children were infants. Their marriage is an arrangement to bring greater wealth to two well-to-do French peasant families and to end a thirty-year feud. 1

At the feast which follows the wedding, the adults have fun, eating and drinking and laughing. Nobody pays any attention to the young bride and groom. Later that evening, the children are put to bed together by the adults. This custom symbolizes the completion of the marriage. Both lie still and silent, not touching each other, while the families linger around the bed, laughing and joking. 2

Much to Bertrande's relief, Martin turns away without speaking and falls asleep quickly. Bertrande lies awake thinking about her new father-in-law, Martin's father. He seems very stern and harsh. As patriarch of the family, this man has her life in his power. Martin is the only son and heir, but he will remain a legal minor until his father dies. He must do whatever the father orders. Bertrande must obey Martin's commands as well as his father's. She wonders what will happen if she should ever do something wrong, or if she does not please Martin or his father. With these unhappy thoughts, she dozes off. 3

In the morning, she returns to her own home to live until she is old enough to take on the responsibilities of a rich peasant's wife. When she is 14 years old, her mother dies. Bertrande is sent

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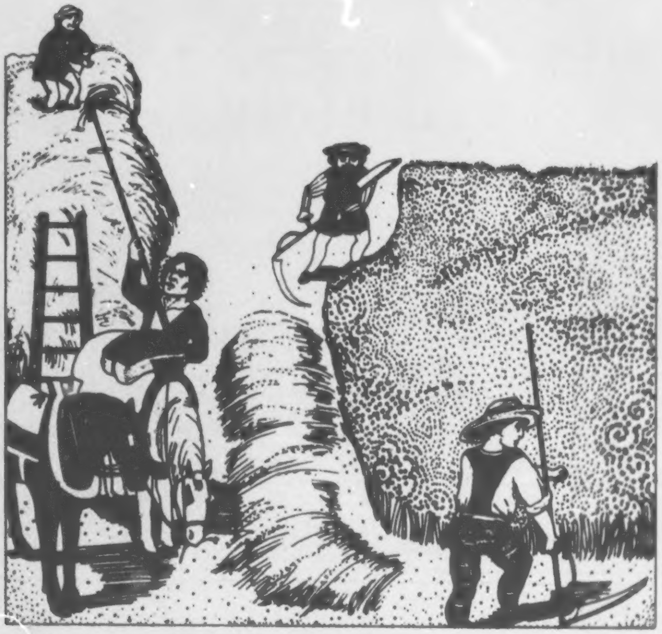
*From *The Wife of Martin Guerre*, by Janet Lewis.

[1] Bertrande and Martin Guerre were real people according to court records. Their family and friends are fictional characters created by the author.



to live in Martin's house as his wife. She arrives, barefoot, in work clothes, bringing her dowry of linens and silver. Her mother-in-law greets her kindly and shows her around the farm. 4

How orderly it all looks! Bertrande has never seen so many large storerooms filled with baskets of fruit and chestnuts, pots of honey and stone crocks of chicken and goose preserved in oil. There is a special room for the loom and the wool and flax for the distaff. Martin's mother explains that Bertrande's special duties will be in the dairy to keep the milk sweet, help make cheese and store eggs. In the large garden, Bertrande recognizes many vegetables her own family grows for their table. She hopes that she will be able to work out here. 5

That evening she meets Martin's father for the second time. He is very quiet and serious, but he doesn't frighten Bertrande this time. She feels very safe in his presence. He is the absolute ruler of the household and everyone obeys his commands. He seems so certain of himself that Bertrande is sure no harm can come to her or the family as long as he is around. It is the power of the father that gives the family strength and holds it together. 6

In the first few years, Martin treats Bertrande like one of his sisters. One day Martin goes bear hunting without his father's permission. When he returns, his father hits him and breaks his jaw. Martin says his father was right to punish him but Bertrande feels the punishment was too harsh. His mother explains to them both as she weeps and treats the injured jaw, "If you have no obedience for your father, your son will have none for you. Then what will become of the family? Ruin. Despair." 7

Bertrande has a son when she is twenty years old. Life seems very beautiful to her. She loves Martin very much. She enjoys the chores—feeding animals, helping with cooking and spinning wool. Martin's parents treat her with new respect as the mother of a son who will be the heir to the family property. 8

She is proud of her responsibilities as the future mistress of the household. In addition to helping in the kitchen, she now supervises the work in the dairy. Also, it is her spinning, weaving, and sewing which provides clothing for the entire household. 9

However, Martin is restless and impatient with his father's restrictions. One day he tells Bertrande that he is leaving home for awhile. He has taken some of his father's grain to plant his own fields. He knows he will be punished severely. Martin is afraid of his father's anger. In those days, children regarded their parents, especially the father, as the true image of God upon earth. 10

Martin says he will return in a week or so when his father will realize how right he was and forgive him. But many weeks, then months, pass and Martin does not return. After the first year, Bertrande realizes that Martin has found freedom from his father's rules more precious than his wife and child and farm. She is sure he will return only when his father's death will allow him to claim his inheritance. 11

Bertrande is ashamed and hurt by Martin's desertion. But she is helpless to protest or complain. When he returns, he will be master of the house. For a wife to complain about a husband's behavior would be like treason against God. Bertrande has been taught from childhood to obey those she feels are her superiors: God, King, and the family patriarch. As her husband, Martin represents all of these. If she criticizes him, she is being disrespectful to the others. 12

Bertrande keeps silent, trying to find happiness in the care of her little boy, Sanxi. In the second year of Martin's absence, his mother dies. Bertrande becomes the mistress of the house. She supervises the servants and Martin's sisters, but there is no laughter in the house. 13

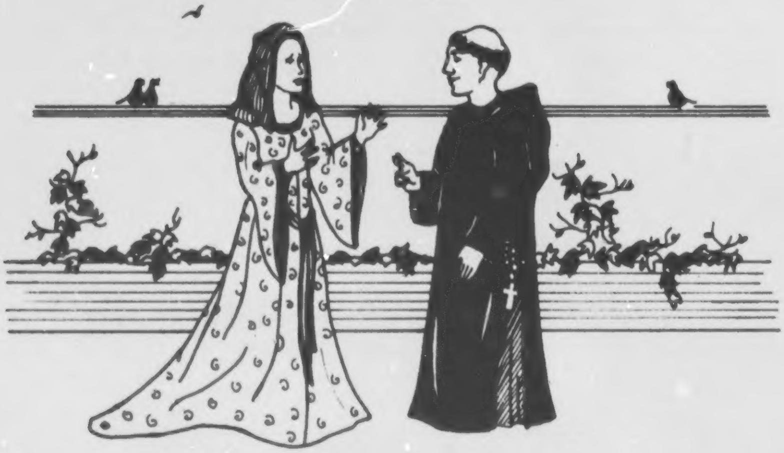
Four years after Martin's leaving, his father is thrown from a horse, and dies instantly. His brother, Pierre, comes to live in the house as its master. Bertrande feels secure with his presence, but she hopes that Martin will now return. She invites travelers to the house for food and shelter so they will spread the news of her father-in-law's death wherever they go. She even travels herself to the nearest town to tell the local priest to make announcements in church. She asks innkeepers to put up public notices. Her hopes are high that she will soon see her husband again. 14

But years pass by without any word at all of Martin. Bertrande accepts her fate as a widow, because now she believes that he is dead. She spends more and more time with her little boy.

One afternoon, eight years after Martin's disappearance, Martin's uncle and sisters burst into the house crying, "Martin is back! Martin is here!" Bertrande is so shocked that she can hardly stand. She leans against a chair and looks at this man who appears in the doorway. It is not the Martin that she remembers. He looks like Martin, and yet he doesn't. He seems shorter, with a fuller figure. However, the eyes shining over the full beard look very much like Martin's and as he moves toward her, she lets her emotions show. Everyone is crying and hugging and kissing one another. The little boy, Sanxi, hides behind his mother's skirts when Martin asks for him. But, gradually, during the evening he overcomes his shyness and sits closer and closer to his father.

That night, Bertrande tells Martin that he seems strange to her, that she cannot believe that it is really he. Martin then tells her of the years he has spent fighting in wars in many parts of France and Spain and of the hundreds of people he has met. All these experiences, he says, have changed him. He is not the old Martin. Bertrande is so happy to have a husband that she allows herself to love and be loved.

Martin takes over the running of the farm and everything prospers. He has a way of treating the serfs and the household servants with kindness and humor so that they work harder just to please him. Bertrande is amazed by this change in the old silent and stern Martin. It is with his son that the new Martin really seems a stranger. He is so affectionate and loving with the little boy, so unlike the Martin she had known. All of these changes make Bertrande fearful that this man is not her true husband, but when she confesses these fears, he laughs at her, saying, "You are pregnant now. And pregnant women often have strange ideas. Wait until your baby is born, and you won't feel like this."



So Bertrande is relieved. She tries to put her doubts aside and enjoy life with this new loving husband. However, after a baby son is born, her suspicions do not disappear. Bertrande begins to think to herself, "If this man is *not* Martin, then I have committed adultery. I will be doomed to burn in hell forever."

She becomes so frightened that she goes to the priest for help. But when she tells him of her fears, he is astonished. "What are you accusing him of? Kindness?" He tells her she is imagining things and not to worry about sinning.

When she speaks of her suspicions to one of Martin's sisters, she is told that she is mad and an ungrateful wife. Finally, she realizes that this man has become so well loved by everyone in the family and the community that no one will listen to her doubts. She sees no way to rid herself of the sin she is sure she has committed.

Finally, one day a wandering soldier, home from the wars, denounces Martin as an impostor because he has no wooden leg. This man says that the real Martin Guerre lost a leg in the wars and now has a wooden one. The family angrily sends the soldier away, but Bertrande knows now that she is right. She has some real evidence that her husband is an impostor and that she is not mad.

She convinces Uncle Pierre that she is correct about Martin, and he goes to the authorities. The soldiers arrive and lead Martin off to prison in chains. The whole family rushes out to bid him good-bye, crying and kissing him. The little boy, Sanxi, will not speak to his mother at all. Bertrande stands alone by the cold and empty fireplace as Martin is led off.

At the trial, witnesses testify that this Martin is a rogue (rascal) by the name of Arnaud du Tilh, and that he does indeed look a great deal like Martin Guerre. However, all of the family except Pierre, testify that it is the real Martin Guerre. The judges decide that the wife's testimony is the most important. They sentence him to death by beheading. Bertrande is horrified and calls out, "No! No! I didn't ask for his death!"

Martin's sisters appeal the verdict, and a new trial is set in Toulouse, the largest city in the region. Now, everyone puts pressure on Bertrande to withdraw her charges. The sisters come to her in tears, begging her to save the man they believe to be their brother. The priest tells her that she may be committing a more serious sin by pressing these charges. She may be sending an innocent man to his death. Her son will not speak to her, running from the room when she enters.

Alone and unhappy, Bertrande is left to solve this terrible dilemma. How can she regain the love of her family and still be rid of the impostor? His presence threatens the very power and strength of the Guerre family which was held first by Martin's father and now by Pierre.

At the second trial, new witnesses appear who are confused by the physical likeness of this Martin to their memory of the old one. But the testimony of the family and the servants and the priest convince the judges that this is the real Martin after all. They feel that Bertrande is not quite rational because of her recent childbirth fever, and they announce that the prisoner may go free.

However, before the clerk can sign the document, a new witness appears. He is a soldier, stomping in on a wooden leg. When the family, servants and neighbors see him, they realize that they have been fooled. This is the long-lost Martin.

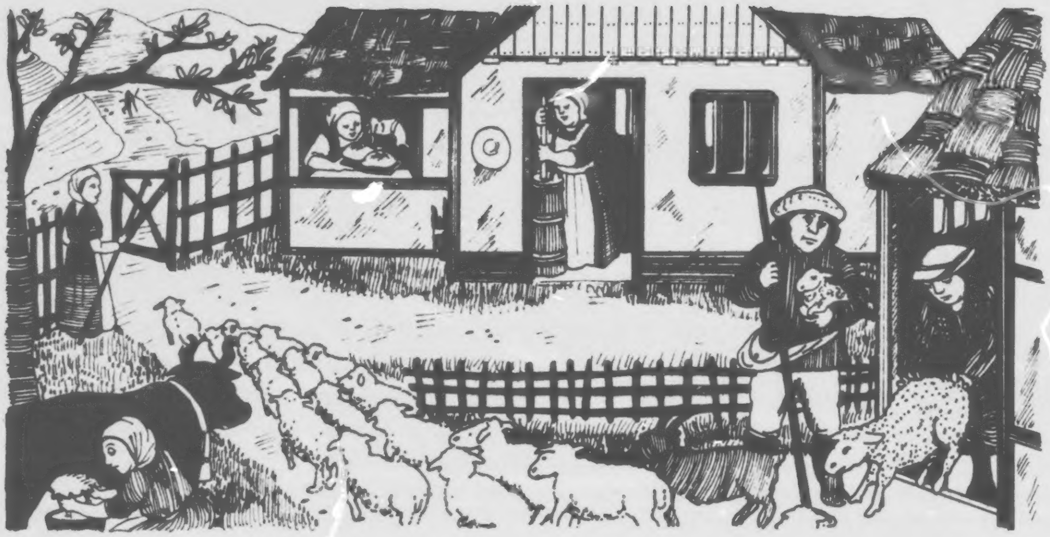
When Bertrande is brought into court to face him, she falls on the floor at his feet, crying and begging his forgiveness. Martin does not look at her or respond in any way. The judges ask Bertrande's forgiveness for not believing her story, but her husband looks stern.

Finally, he says to her, "Dry your tears. They won't help me forget what you have done. The fact that my sisters and uncle were fooled is no excuse for you. You were my wife and should have known better. You deliberately committed this sin. You, and only you, are the cause of my dishonor."

As he speaks, Bertrande sees in his face the look of her father-in-law, the stern patriarch in her life. She sees no hope of forgiveness for herself. As she turns to leave, the other Martin leans forward to ask for mercy. She turns on him saying, "You, sir, gave me no mercy, body or soul."

Bertrande walks from the courtroom alone.

Court records show that Arnold du Tilh was hanged in front of Martin Guerre's home on September 12, 1560. There are no records to tell us what became of Bertrande or Martin Guerre.



THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE*

PART 1

A wedding! For days the village of Artigues had waited with great happiness for the union of two rich peasant households, both of which were as ancient and proud as any landlord's. Eleven-year-old Bertrande de Rols and Martin Guerre, only a little older, betrothed since they were infants, were to be wed on this day in January 1539.

The fact that they had never seen each other before the day of their wedding was not important. What did matter was that their marriage would settle a long-standing feud between the two families caused when one great-grandfather had insulted the other great-grandfather more than thirty years before. What mattered most of all was that the marriage would bring greater prosperity to both families through the combining of some of their lands.

Bertrande felt and saw throughout the entire day this order of importance. Except for the wedding ceremony itself, she felt quite left out. The great feast at the house of her new in-laws was chiefly an occasion for merrymaking and congratulations for her parents and those of her new husband.

Sitting next to her mother at the table, but largely neglected, Bertrande finally slipped away to explore the house. Noting the large canopied and curtained beds and huge fireplace in the main room, Bertrande opened a door and walked cautiously down a dark hallway. At the other end, her new husband was opening a shutter. Hearing her footsteps, he turned toward her. His long, young face bore a fearsome expression. He disliked being married like this, and that, combined with his already strong feelings of superiority toward his new wife, led him to attack her without a

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*From *The Wife of Martin Guerre*, by Janet Lewis.

word giving her a severe boxing on the ears. Bertrande's cries brought her aunt who separated them and without a word of reproach to Martin led both children back to the main room.

After the feasting, the two children were dressed in night clothes and put in the same bed in the presence of all the guests. After much laughter and joking about what might happen if the children were a few years older, the adults finally left the children alone.

The last to leave was Martin Guerre's father, also named Martin, who wished the children goodnight His strong, serious face, its expression exaggerated by the flickering torchlight, conveyed to the young girl a sudden realization that now her entire life lay beneath his absolute jurisdiction and the secondary jurisdiction of the boy next to her. To her relief, the young Martin merely declared himself tired and went to sleep, leaving her alone.

The next day, Bertrande returned to her own family. She stayed there until she was fourteen and of an age when she could better assume her duties as a part of the Guerre household.

One day, a kindly housekeeper from the Guerre farm came to conduct Bertrande away from all the familiar sights and sounds of her childhood into her new role as the wife of Martin Guerre. Her new life carried special responsibilities because her husband was the sole son and heir to the wealth and traditions of generations of this feudal peasant family.

Bertrande's new mother-in-law showed her more kindness and attention than she would again for a long time. After a leisurely tour of the buildings and grounds of the farm, Bertrande was given the task of grinding meal in a mortar. Her mother-in-law told her many things so that the young wife might begin to understand the household she would one day be called on to direct.

That evening, the men began returning from the fields. The animals were driven into pens and stables to protect them from the wolves. One by one the men assembled in the main room of the house, joined at the last by Martin's father and the young Martin. Without a smile, but in a somewhat kindly voice, the old master summoned Bertrande to him, saying, "Sit here, my daughter," indicating a place next to him. "Tonight you shall be waited on. Tomorrow you shall have your own share of the labors of the house."

When his attention was elsewhere, Bertrande stole timid, sidelong glances at the stern, calm face. She realized that he was stern and calm in the assurance of his absolute authority. In him resided the authority of the patriarch, vigilantly surveying his household domain just as a king might survey his kingdom. From the old master flowed both authority and security for the ordering of all things. To the young Bertrande it seemed that his iron presence guaranteed the order of the household, the order of Artigues, and the order of the entire world. Her place would be to assure the household continuity by contributing her labor to the general good, and by bearing her husband an heir. Thus, a few years later when she gave birth to a son, her esteem in the household rose considerably, and daily both mother and son grew in strength. The new generation of the house of Guerre was assured.

Bertrande's husband, too, was serving an apprenticeship for his future role as head and patriarch. His temperament seemed suited to the task. Silent, headstrong and stern, he was as much like his father as a son could be. Yet these qualities led to the clash with his father which led to Bertrande's complete tragedy.

By law Martin remained a minor until his father's death, subordinate to him in every respect. Just as a vassal owed allegiance to his lord until death, so Martin owed allegiance to his father. This was so, so that when Martin himself came into his role as household head, he, too, could insure the ordering of the household realm. Bertrande observed Martin's obedience to this order and also understood his impatience. Once, when Martin had gone bear hunting without his father's permission, his father had punished him with a blow so hard it had broken two teeth. No one interceded for him or protested the harshness of the punishment. Even Martin's mother had said, "You understand, my son, it is necessary. If you have no obedience for your father, your son will have none for you, and then what will become of

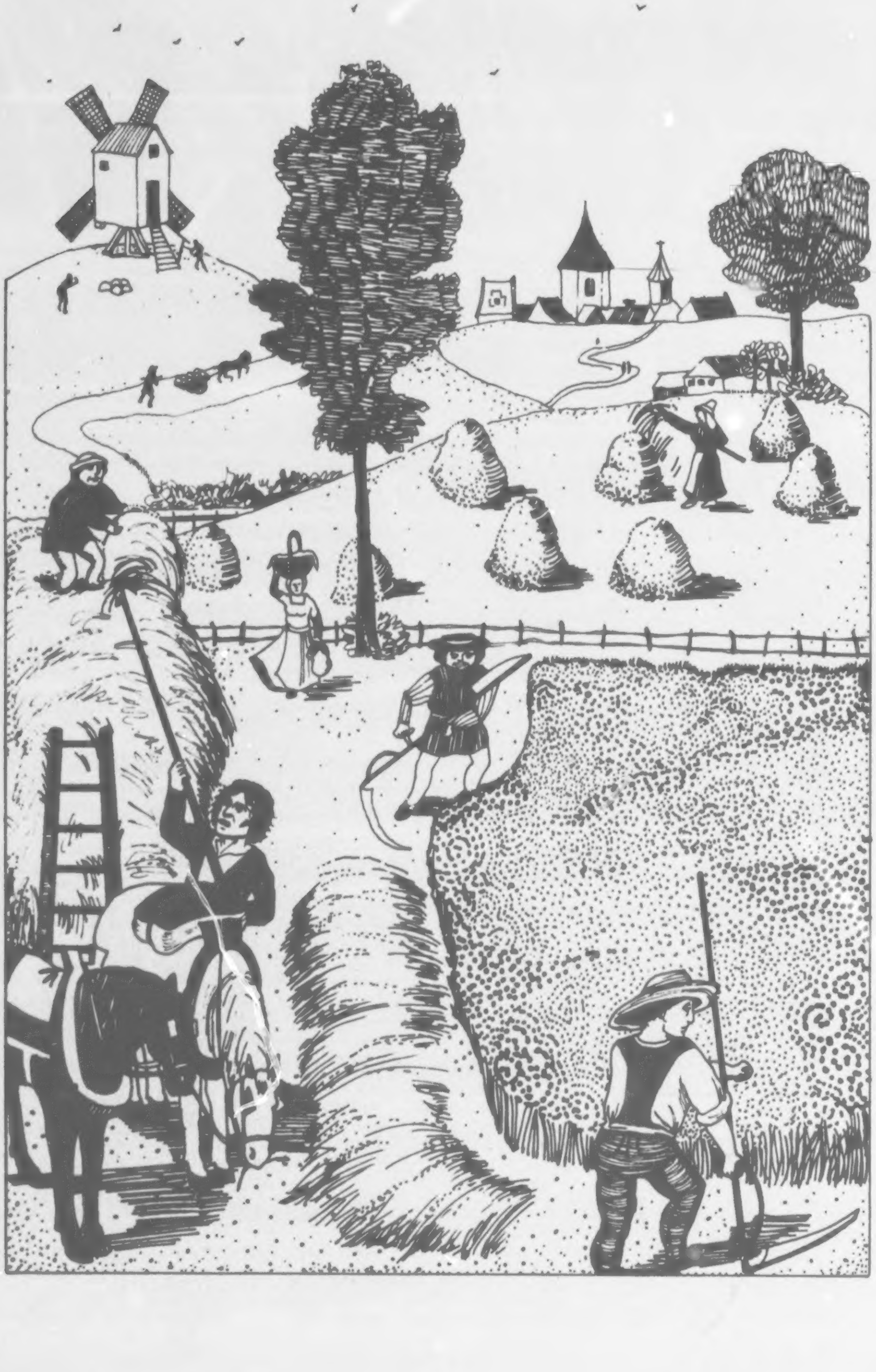
the family? Ruin. Despair.'' Even Martin had said simply, ''Yes, I understand.'' Only later, in private, had Bertrande sympathized with Martin.

Then, one autumn day, Martin took Bertrande aside and announced he was leaving. Bertrande started, but controlled herself as Martin explained he had once again broken with his father's authority. He had taken seed grain to plant a new field without his father's permission. To escape the inevitable punishment, Martin would go down into the lowlands. He thought that once his father saw that what he had done was for the good of the household, the old master would forgive the breach of authority.

Although sympathizing with him, Bertrande, in a sudden premonition of disaster, clung to his arm and begged him not to go. But Martin reassured her he would be away only a week or two. Because he seemed anxious to go, Bertrande released his arm after a last caress. Before he slipped into the forest shadows he turned and waved with a free and elated gesture.

Martin's absence lengthened beyond the few weeks. At first Bertrande did not want him to come home. The old master would forgive neither Martin's disobedience nor his absence from his inheritance. His [father's] displeasure remained unmoved even as the weeks stretched into months and the months into years. He remained unmoved even until his sudden death in a riding accident only a few months after his wife had died from illness. Thus, suddenly, Bertrande was thrust into the role of household director while good Uncle Pierre assumed the role of household head.

Without Martin or the old master, the mood grew solemn and grim. Bertrande gave Martin a year to hear of his father's death and return to his inheritance. When he did not, she at last had to admit that Martin had either abandoned her or was dead. There was no choice for her but to continue her life directing the affairs of the house and raising her son as best she could. Gradually, Bertrande came to accept her state that was so like widowhood but which always contained the sad, yet tantalizing, hope that one day the young master would return and life would become whole once again.



THE WIFE OF MARTIN GUERRE

PART 2

One day, Bertrande was instructing her son in the catechism. As she made him repeat the words, her mind wandered to the memory of her husband, who had now been gone eight years. His memory, much to her dismay, was becoming thin and faint. Sanxi, her son, looked up at his mother, waiting for the next question. She began to speak when a commotion burst out in the courtyard.

Uncle Pierre, without even knocking, threw open the door to the room exclaiming, "He has come home! Here is your husband Martin!" Bertrande rose from the chair, clutching her hands to her heart, as a bearded man in soldier's garb came to the door. It was he . . . or was it? A man stood before her, a little shorter and huskier than she remembered. But he looked like Martin. In her surprise, all her pent-up emotions poured out. Bertrande cried, "Ah, why have you been away so long! Cruel! Cruel! Even your voice sounds strange!" The man looked in silent admiration and surprise at the beautiful woman before him.

Uncle Pierre broke in, "This is no way to greet your husband, with reproaches. My nephew, you must forgive her." "No Uncle," replied the stranger who was Bertrande's husband. "She is right. It is I, who left you unprotected for so long, who should ask pardon of her." His reply left Bertrande deeply moved and a little surprised. Uncle Pierre beamed, "Ah, you have grown in spirit as well as body while you were away. It was spoken like a true father and head of the house."

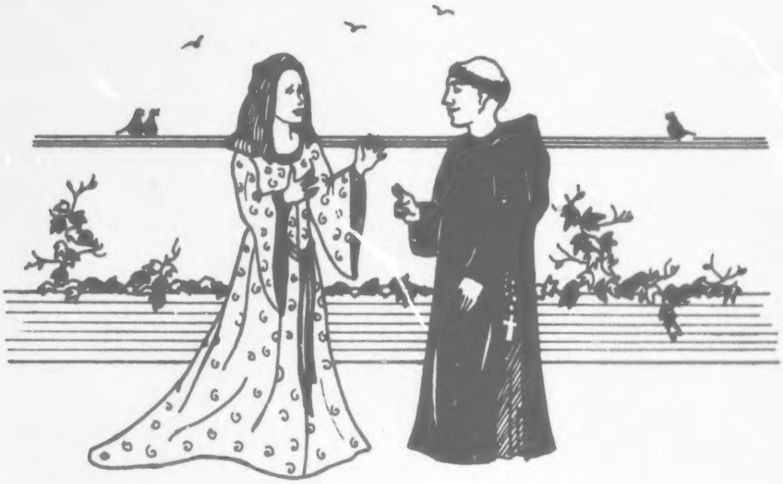
In the strangeness of the first few days, doubts and confusion assailed Bertrande. She wanted to believe this man who won her affection and the esteem and goodwill of the family and village. But he was almost too kind and indulgent, so unlike the old stern, arrogant Martin. As the months passed into the first year, her love for her husband grew and deepened and would have been perfect except for the nameless fear which sometimes stole over her heart. Had she not had an instinctive warning the night of his return that something was terribly amiss with this man? And yet he brought everyone such happiness. Once, seeing Sanxi and Martin together talking and laughing, she said to herself, "He is too easy with our son. Ah! I am an unhappy woman. If I sin, this happiness is itself punishment."

Bertrande prepared herself for the birth of a second child. As the time drew near for birth, she felt a new and keen awareness of the happy and bustling life around her. The new Martin had a way of noticing the good work of the servants,which made them redouble their efforts. And the shadow of sin which clung to her seemed to enhance the feelings she had. Just as the dreadful crying of a wolf in winter heightened her feelings of security and warmth in the house, so this doubt of the new Martin seemed to enhance her love for him.

Finally, she could hide the truth from herself no longer. After the birth of the child, a son, she finally admitted that she was betrayed and deceived into adultery. Putting aside all denial and doubt, she at last felt relieved and freed from torment, but what could she do? She must be rid of this man, but how? To be silent meant condemnation to a life of sin, but to accuse him of being an impostor would ruin the new-found happiness and harmony of the household. Bertrande did not know where to turn. She felt that perhaps she was mad.

In desperation Bertrande went to the priest, and at confession she said she believed she had committed the sin of adultery with a man who was not the real Martin Guerre. Having laid out her evidence, the priest asked, "Is it, then, for his kindness that you accuse him?" He explained that Martin himself had understood his wife's suspicions and had spoken to him about it. The priest thought that Martin's years away had improved his spirit with kindness and gentleness but had had the opposite effect on his wife's mind, causing her to be a bit unbalanced.

Unable to enlist the aid of the priest, that night Bertrande confronted Martin and asked him to leave her. But Martin refused,



saying, "It would only serve to deepen your madness." After a moment, he also asked, "And how is it that you believe me to be a fake?" Bertrande, her eyes filled with tears replied, "Because the real Martin would, perhaps, have struck me for asking this." The new Martin laughed shortly and then rose with a stern look on his face. "There are others to be considered besides yourself. School yourself, Madame, to the inevitable."

After this, though life appeared to continue as usual, Bertrande grew thin and sickly. She was once again pregnant. Day after day she watched and waited for a break so she could accuse this man openly.

One day Martin, accompanied by the priest and Uncle Pierre, was on the road to the next town when they were accosted by a grimy, disreputable-looking soldier who claimed to be an old war comrade of Martin's. When Martin did not recognize him, the man bent down and pinched Martin's leg below the knee. He stood up with an expression of surprise accusing Martin of being a rogue and an impostor. "The real Martin Guerre lost a leg in battle and now has a wooden one," he said. "I have heard of a man who greatly resembled him. And now I see this is so." Uncle Pierre threatened him, calling him a liar. But the soldier merely shrugged and said, "It makes no difference to me if this man is a rogue. He is your relative, not mine." With that, he walked away.

When Uncle Pierre told Bertrande of the incident, she collapsed on the floor, crying out, "At last, dear God, I am saved!" That night, in a fever she gave birth to a baby which died soon after. The entire family gathered around her door, whispering "She is mad. His long absence drove her mad. Perhaps we should humor her and the fit will pass."

During her recovery, Bertrande refused to see Martin. But as soon as she was able, she sent for Uncle Pierre, whom she still considered the rightful head of the house in the absence of the real Martin. She pleaded her case to him. "I am not mad. Please believe me." Pierre nodded his head. "It is true, at first I did not believe you. But you are Martin's wife and are the one to know." After a silence he said, "Madame, give me your permission to accuse this man of his crime." Bertrande sobbed, "Do as you like, only rid me of his presence."

A few days later, soldiers came from Rieux and took the master of the house away in chains. Sanxi burst into tears as the entire household gathered around to bid Martin farewell. Bertrande stayed inside, standing completely alone before the cold and empty fireplace.

The trial took place at Rieux, where the nearest court met. The sensation of the trial brought a huge crowd of spectators and witnesses. Of these, some testified that the accused was a well-known rogue named Arnaud du Tilh. Others could not decide. Still others declared the man to be Martin Guerre. Finally, the judges concluded that by giving more weight to Bertrande's testimony than anyone else's because she was the wife, the accused was Arnaud du Tilh. They sentenced him to do penance in public and then to be beheaded in front of Martin Guerre's house. Bertrande, aghast at the death sentence, cried out, "No, no. Not death. I have not demanded his death!"

Perhaps, if the matter had ended there, in time everyone would have become reconciled to fate. But Martin's sisters appealed the case to a higher court in Toulouse. During the long interim months, everyone pleaded with Bertrande to withdraw her accusation. Even the kindly, loyal housekeeper who had fetched Bertrande from her parents' house so many years before pleaded with her. Her kindly old face looked at Bertrande as she said, "I, Madame, would still have you deceived. We were all happy then."

Through it all, however, Uncle Pierre stood by her, and this meant a great deal to her. He still represented to Bertrande the authority of the rightful head of the household.

At the new trial, all was not the same as before. Bertrande was filled with self-doubt. The priest warned her against the even greater sin of causing the death of her own husband, especially since even she was not completely and absolutely convinced that this man might not be her real husband. Her doubt also included the impostor himself. Who was this Arnaud du Tilh? Why did he not return her hatred with hatred? Why had he not run away when she first confronted him? Without her confidence, she did not make a good impression on the judges. Neither did Uncle Pierre, who testified after her.

At last, the judges decided to reverse the decision. The man was, according to this court, the real Martin Guerre. The spectators were murmuring their approval when a commotion broke out at the doorway. The guards pounded the butts of their lances on the floor for order. A soldier appeared in the door, and as he walked toward the judges another sound mingled with that of the lances. It was the sound of a wooden leg. The judges stared at the man in complete amazement. "Body of God," declared one. "This is either Martin Guerre or the devil."

The judges ordered the two men to stand side by side, and the key witnesses were brought in one by one to make their choice. Martin's sisters and other relatives, with many apologies and expressions of sorrow for their mistake, flung themselves on the new Martin, who received them all with a cold reserve. Finally, Bertrande herself was brought in. When at last she lifted her eyes and saw her husband, she uttered a great cry and slowly sank to her knees, reaching out her hands toward her husband. "My dear lord and husband, forgive me and pity me." The tears began to run quietly down her face.

Martin Guerre surveyed his wife coldly for a moment and answered, "Dry your tears, Madame. They cannot, and they ought not, move my pity. The example of the others can be no excuse for you, Madame, who knew me better than any living soul. Your behavior could only have been willful. You, and only you, are answerable for the dishonor which has befallen me."

Bertrande did not protest. Rising to her feet, she recoiled a step or two in unconscious self-defense from his severe and exact authority. In the silence which followed Martin's unexpected severity, Arnaud's voice spoke gently. "Madame, you came to suspect the change in Martin Guerre, who gave up such sternness to become the most indulgent of all husbands. Do you not marvel that for love of your beauty and grace, the rogue, Arnaud du Tilh, became for three long years an honest man? I had thought to ask you for mercy."

Bertrande recoiled from this new encounter as well. "I marvel that you dare to speak to me. You have deprived me of even the pity of my husband. You had no mercy upon me, either body or soul."

"Then, Madame," came a soft, sad reply, "I can but die by way of atonement."

Bertrande turned from him to her husband, and then, without speaking she slowly walked from the court.

A decree of September 12, 1560, announced that Arnaud du Tilh was hanged before the house of Martin Guerre. Of Martin Guerre and his wife there is no further record, but when hate and love have together exhausted the soul, the body seldom endures for long.

LOOKING FOR CLUES

STUDENT ACTIVITY

If Bertrande's behavior seems strange to you, there are clues in the story which help to explain it. Each of us grows up with a set of rules by which to live. These rules are based on customs—beliefs which we have been taught since childhood. You can discover the rules by which Bertrande lived by looking again at the first fourteen paragraphs of the story. In these paragraphs, feudal rules, which Bertrande obeyed, are described. See how many of these rules or customs you can find. Write them briefly in your own words next to the paragraph number in which you found them.

Paragraph 1 ____________________

Paragraph 2 ____________________

Paragraph 3 ____________________

Paragraph 4 ____________________

Paragraph 5 ____________________

Paragraph 6 ____________________

Paragraph 7 ____________________

Paragraph 8 ____________________

Paragraph 9 ____________________

Paragraph 10 ________________________________

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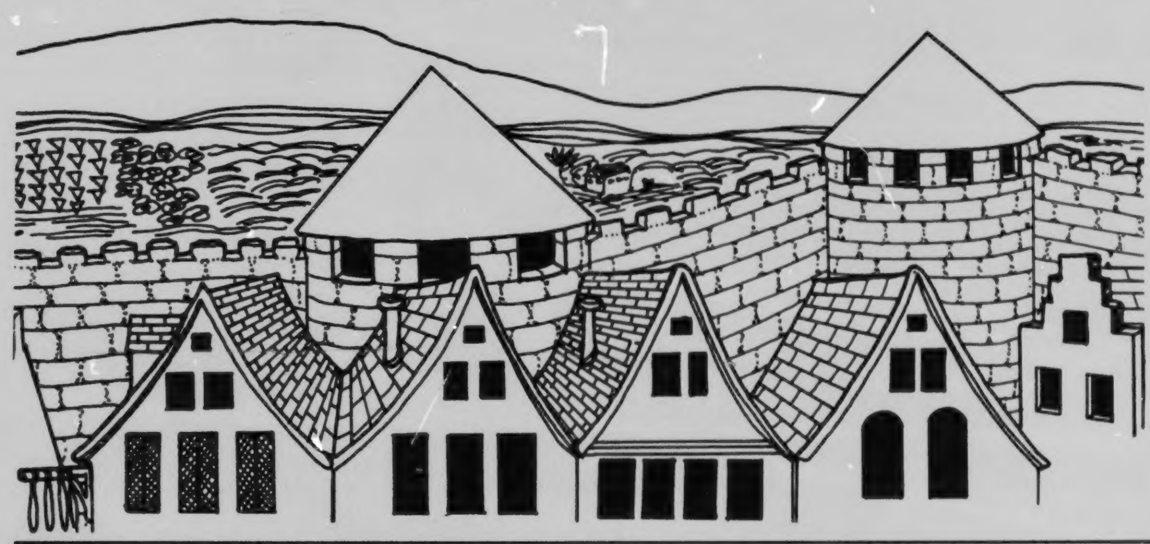
Paragraph 12 ________________________________

Paragraph 13 ________________________________

Paragraph 14 ________________________________



WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY OF FEUDAL EUROPE

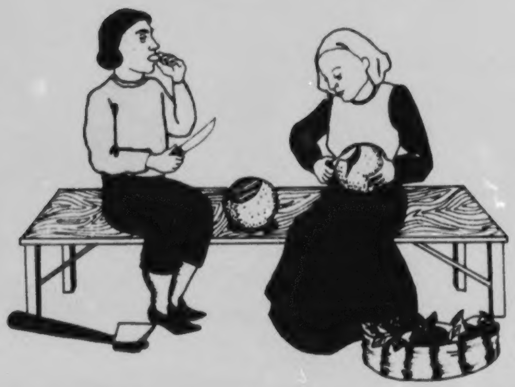
WOMEN AS PRODUCERS

In spite of their low position in the feudal hierarchy, women were essential as producers in the economy of the feudal period. While they were not generally considered "legal persons," their work in the production of food and clothing was necessary for the survival of their families.

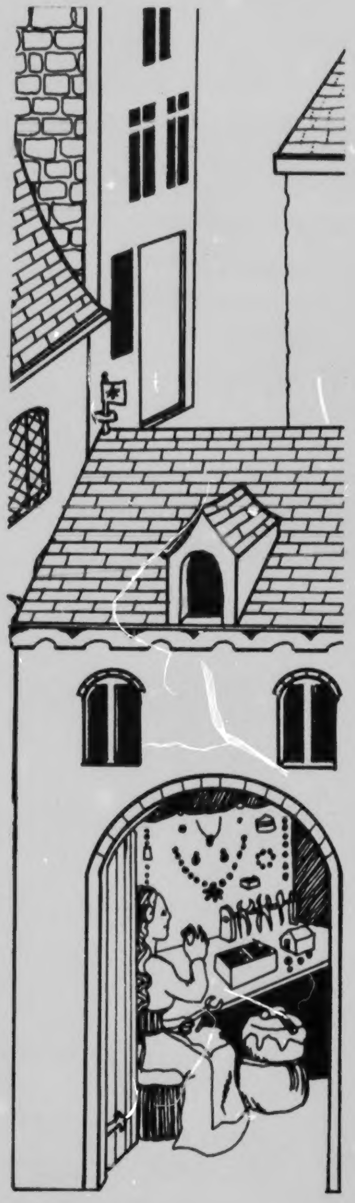
In the *upper classes*, the *noble lady* was the manager of the manor, supervising the work of great numbers of people. In times of war, when her husband was absent, she was responsible for the defense of the castle and manor.

The *peasant wife* bore the greatest share of responsibility for the food and clothing and child care for her family, since her husband was forced to work on the lord's land most of the time.

The peasant man and wife looked upon each other as partners in a struggle for survival. Each needed the other, and they needed many children to help in the struggle. Since there was a high infant mortality, women were encouraged to have more children in order to provide a supply of labor. On the manor, pregnant women had certain privileges. Excused from heavy labor, they could draw rations of bread and firewood in recognition of their condition.



WOMEN IN THE TOWNS



The revival of international trade in the 11th century brought new business to medieval towns. Within the old walled towns little shops were set up to sell every kind of product. People moved into the towns from the countryside to learn new skills and to sell their wares. Records from these old towns show that women played an important part in this busy commercial life. Even then it was necessary for some married women to help support the family and for single women to support themselves. They did not remain at home as housewives. Even if the business was in the home, the household chores were usually performed by young single men and women who were also apprentices in the trade of the household.

Laws were passed which recognized the right of women to have trades independent of their husbands. They were called "femme sole" or single woman laws, and originally were to protect a husband from his wife's debts. But widows and unmarried women also profited by the chance to earn a living as individuals.

Some women carried on more than one trade. These were called "bye industries" and were usually connected with the production of food or drink, brewing, baking, or spinning. However, women were excluded from the regular craft guilds organized by men to protect workers in these trades. Some guilds made rules that no woman could be apprenticed unless she was a wife or daughter of a guild member. Men felt that the lower wages paid to women workers endangered their own income. Only on a husband's death could a widow receive some of the protection and benefits from the guild.

In addition to new skills, the towns gave women the opportunity to learn more about the world from contact with customs and ideas brought in by travelers from faraway lands. The city woman became far more worldly than either the peasant wife or the noble lady on the manor. For example, the shopkeeper had to learn mathematics to keep her books, and a few women became excellent business executives and made fortunes. Sometimes there were schools where even the young girls from the new middle-class home of artisans and shopkeepers could attend with their brothers. Here they learned to read and write and do basic arithmetic.

Patriarchal control of women, however, persisted in the town as well as in the countryside, as is evidenced by women's exclusion from the guilds. Although the businessmen of the new middle class helped bring about the end of the feudal system, they held on to the old belief in women's inferiority. The values and practices of patriarchy continued to keep women in a secondary role even in a changing world.

WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY OF FEUDAL EUROPE

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. In what ways were women *producers* in the feudal economy?

   In the country: ______________________________

   ____

   In the cities: ______________________________

   ____

2. In what ways was life for a townswoman different from Bertrande's life on the farm?

   ____

   ____

   ____

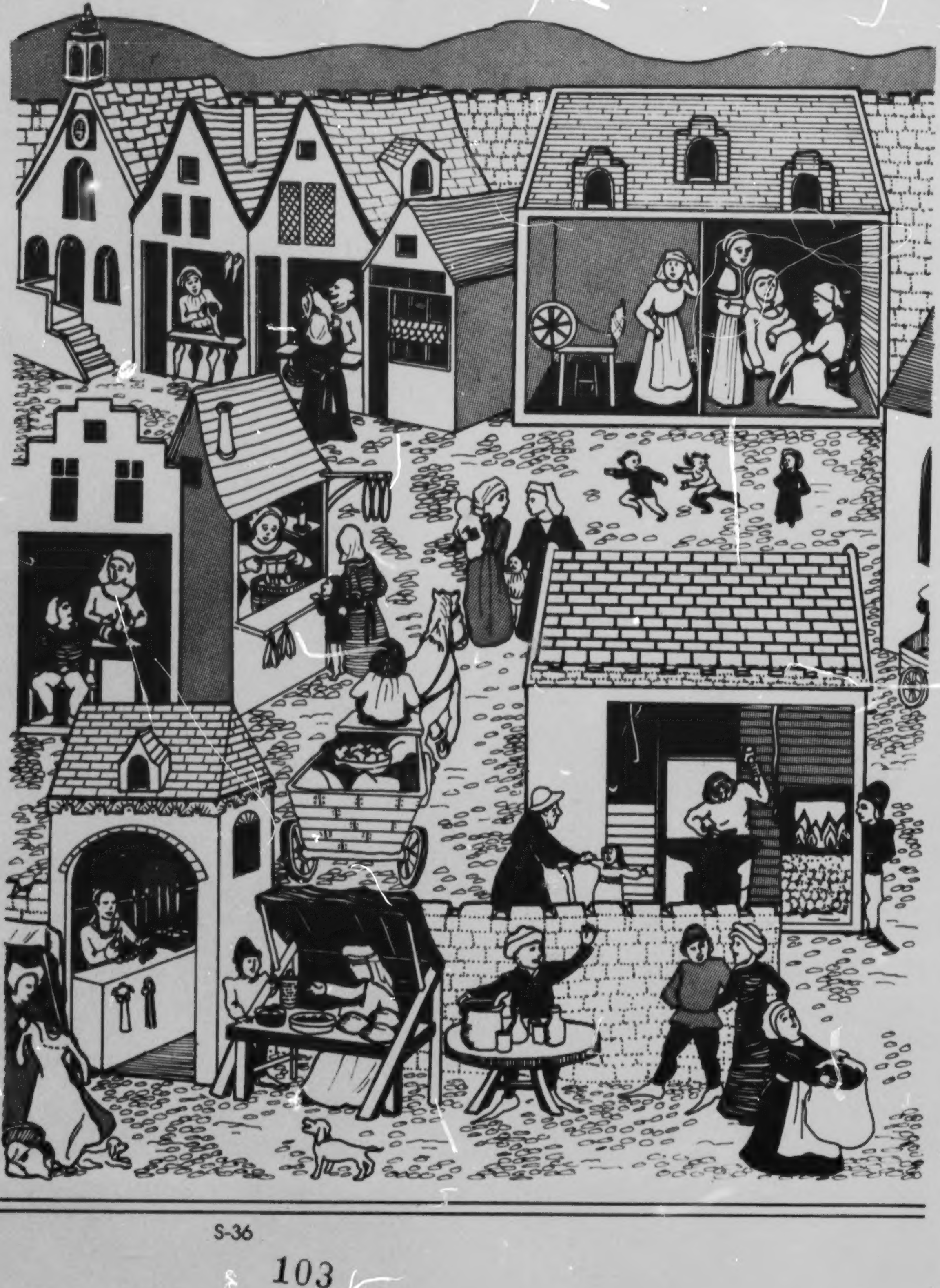
3. What evidence is there that patriarchy still existed even in the towns?

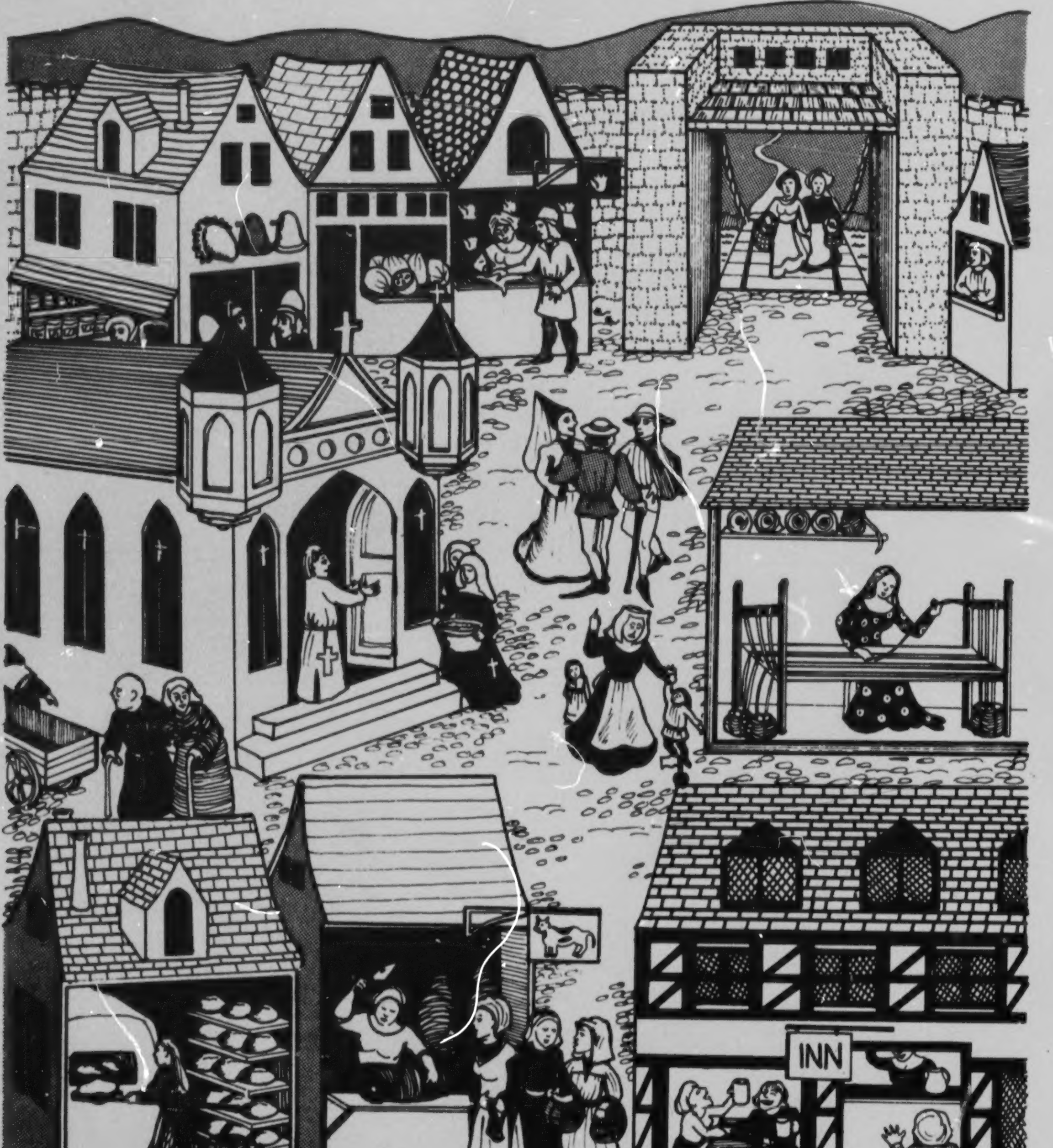
   ____

   ____

   ____

   ____




INN
FLOUR

WOMEN WORKERS IN THE TOWNS OF EUROPE

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Study the illustration carefully.

1. How many different trades do you see women engaged in?

   List as many as you can below:

2. How does the scene contrast with the description of Bertrande's farm? ("The Wife of Martin Guerre") What are the differences in the physical environment?

3. These names were found on medieval town records. Can you guess what each of these women did for a living? Family names were often obtained through the trade one worked in. Look in the dictionary if you can't figure them all out.

Dolly Brewster ____________

Ruth Webster ____________

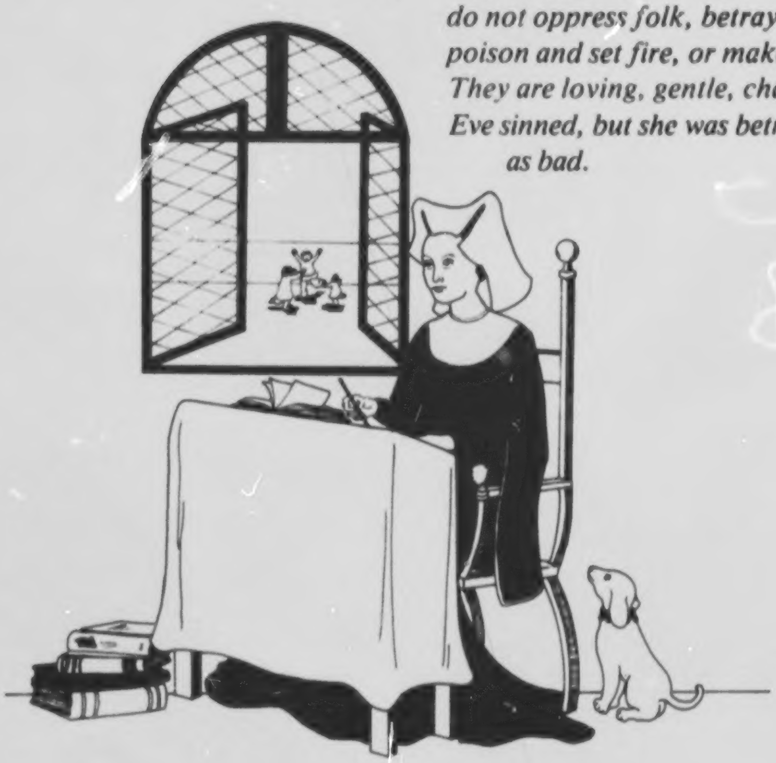
Hannah Smith ____________

Mary Spinster ____________

Martha Chandler ____________

CHRISTINE de PISAN
Author and Champion of Women's Equality

They say no evil is equal to a woman.
But women slay no men, destroy no cities,
do not oppress folk, betray realms, take lands,
poison and set fire, or make false contracts.
They are loving, gentle, charitable, modest, discreet.
Eve sinned, but she was betrayed, and Adam was just
as bad.



These are strong words from a lady of the feudal world. But Christine de Pisan was an unusual woman, a woman with an education. Her father, an Italian nobleman, believed in educating his daughter as well as his sons. He permitted Christine to grow up and be educated as a scholar in Venice, where she met many interesting and important people. Her mother disagreed with these ideas. She wanted Christine to learn feminine skills like the other girls. So Christine had to stop her study of science and begin spinning lessons.

However, when her father went to the court of the King of France, young Christine went with him. There she met her future husband, Henry, who was secretary to the king. Christine was less than 15 years old when she married, but she and Henry had a happy life together. Then before she was 25 years old, Henry died, leaving her with little money and three young children to raise. In order to support her children, she turned to the one skill she could count on, writing.

Christine de Pisan may be the first woman of her time who supported herself by her writing. It was not easy in those days for any writer to earn a living. For a woman, it was unheard of. There were no publishers and people had to depend on wealthy people to publish their books. Fortunately, Christine had many rich friends who liked her poems and essays.

What is also remarkable about Christine de Pisan is that she wrote what she believed, even though her ideas were not popular in those days. She wanted *all* women, of every class, to have an education. She said that if little girls were sent to school like boys and taught the same subjects, girls would learn them as well. Indeed, they might understand the arts and sciences better. If they understand less, she said, it is because they do not go out and see so many different places and things, but stay home and mind their own work. She was probably thinking of her own spinning lessons!

In her most famous book, *City of Ladies*, Christine described a society made up of only women. She claimed that peasant women as well as noblewomen have the brains and the skills necessary to build and run a city as well as men.

Unfortunately, most women never learned about Christine de Pisan or her ideas because they could not read. For the lords and ladies who did read her books, you can imagine the arguments that took place! Some, no doubt, felt that this is what came of letting women be educated at all. Others, for the first time, might have given some attention to the strange idea that women might be worth educating after all.

CHRISTINE de PISAN, Champion of Women's Equality

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Where would Christine belong on the chart of "Feudal Hierarchy in Western Europe"?
2. How did Christine support herself and her children?
3. What did Christine want for all women?
4. Why did her mother object to her education?
5. List the ways her childhood was different from that of the average girl of feudal times.
6. What was the theme of her most famous book?
7. Can you think of anyone today active in the women's movement who sounds to you like Christine de Pisan?

WOMEN IN THE CHINESE PATRIARCHY

How sad it is to be a woman!
Nothing on earth is held so cheap.
Boys stand leaning at the door
Like Gods fallen out of heaven.
Their hearts brave the Four Oceans,
The wind and dust of a thousand miles.
No one is glad when a girl is born;
By her the family sets no store.
Fu Hsuan

In terms of the conditions of women in Chinese feudalism, the most important writings by Confucius had to do with the systems of obligation and women's place. A woman's place was always in relationship to a man and the class standing of his family. Every woman was obligated to a man in her family, whether father, husband or son. Those of the upper classes could at least enjoy deference from people of the lowest class, the peasantry. But the majority of women in feudal China were the lowest of the low. There was no one who owed anything to or was obligated to a peasant wife or daughter.

WIVES

Confucius maintained that it was a law of nature that women should be held under the domination of men since they were the source of disorder and disruption of the harmony of the community. They needed the guidance and control of men in order to keep them out of mischief. According to Confucian teachings, a woman's entire life should be organized around three obediences:

As a girl, she must obey her father.
As a wife, she must obey her husband.
As a widow, she must obey her son.

The only honorable state for women was marriage and their chief role was as the mothers of male heirs. The worst sin any woman could commit was to fail to produce a boy child. In such a case, she could be returned to her parents and the marriage would be annulled, or her husband would take a second wife in the hope of having a son. If her husband died, she could not remarry. Even if she had been betrothed to her husband as a child and they had never lived together as husband and wife, she was considered a widow and was supposed to live with and serve his parents.

BRIDES

A young unmarried daughter was only a temporary member of the family group, remaining at home only long enough to become of marriageable age or condition. She lost her family name when she left her parents' home. Often the young wife was unable to return to visit her own family after her marriage. She came to her husband's home a stranger, and she remained a stranger until the birth of a child, preferably a male. At this event, she was accorded more respect by her husband's family, but she remained under the domination of her mother-in-law. When any dispute arose between her and her mother-in-law, her husband was supposed to take his mother's side.

For poor Chinese families, marrying off daughters was at once a liability and an asset. The family lost the daughter's services, but usually received some kind of "bride price," in money or goods. The poorest peasants sometimes were forced to sell their daughters as slaves or concubines.

Girls were sometimes married off at an early age to men fifteen or twenty years older than they. On the other hand, a girl might be betrothed or married to an infant or very small child so that she could be a servant in her husband's home for years before he was mature. At the marriage ceremony, the bride was supposed to crawl under a saddle to show her willingness to work like a beast until she died.

As a mother-in-law, the Asian woman enjoyed more power than at any other time in her life.

> *As a compensation for [their] lack of power outside the home [genteel Chinese ladies] came to wield great power inside the home. Theoretically, the men were the heads of the families; but in nearly every Chinese house, the real head was the "Dowager Mother"—the oldest living woman on the male side of the line. Out of respect to her, the men of the family gave in to her wishes, going against her wishes only in moments of extreme seriousness. As for the rest of the family, all the wives, children, and servants were expected to defer to her as a queen.*[1]

Even then, she never achieved a position of economic independence. Although she issued household orders, she was still under the domination of her husband or her eldest son. Even though her labor was essential to the family, she was not economically independent. How she behaved toward her daughters-in-law usually depended on how she had been treated as a bride in the same household. Women waited eagerly for this period and the opportunity to exert some authority. Thus, the system was continued for generations.

FOOT BINDING

The bound feet of the women of China were symbolic of men's distrust of women. It was felt that women must be kept restricted since they might disrupt the harmony of the community.

From the 10th century through the early years of the 20th century, women in the middle and upper classes were expected to bind their feet. Bound feet became a status symbol proving that upper-class women had no need to move about, because they had servants to do their work. Lower-class women had their feet bound in hope of marriage into a wealthy family and because it was fashionable.

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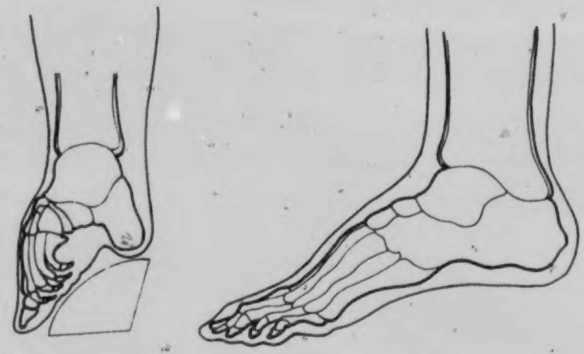
[1] *My Revolutionary Years: The Autobiography of Madame Wei Tao-Ming,* Wei Yu-Hsin, Charles Scribner & Sons, 1943. p. 139.

The origin of the custom is not known, but it was a painful and crippling process. At about five years of age, a little girl's feet were wrapped in yards of cotton cloth so that the four small toes were bent under, toward the sole of the foot.

If the bones did not bend enough by pressure, the bones were broken to force the foot into a pointed shape. This was considered very beautiful by the Chinese male. It was a sex symbol. Men looked at a woman's feet, not at her face, to judge her beauty.

The bound feet crippled her so that she could only hobble around the house. The result of this custom was that women became helpless.

Feet are bound not to make them beautiful as a
curved bow,
But to restrain women when they go out of doors.
Old Chinese proverb



LACK OF AN EDUCATION

According to Confucius, woman's virtue lay in a lack of education. Consequently, girls generally did not share with boys in the same opportunities for learning. Peasant girls learned only household skills so that they could make a good marriage. Pan Ch'ao, the most famous woman scholar of China, believed that girls should be educated. The daughter of an eminent scholar, she had been given an extraordinary education. Since there were no books for girls, she wrote one, called *Lessons for Women*. These were rules to help young girls strengthen their character and guide their behavior. Pan Ch'ao was no rebel. Her lessons were based on Confucian teachings, which kept women in the inferior position. She said that all women should try to develop these four virtues:

- Womanly virtue—know your place, be modest, always be last.
- Womanly words—do not speak too much or in coarse language.
- Womanly bearing—always appear attractive for your husband.
- Womanly work—do your household chores neatly and quickly.

If a woman followed these rules, she would be a perfect wife and mother. So said Pan Ch'ao. And so said Confucian scholars. There was no question these were the roles every woman was expected to fulfill.

WOMEN IN THE CHINESE PATRIARCHY

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Why did Confucius feel that women needed men's control?

2. What were the three obediences?

3. What was the purpose of a woman's life supposed to be according to Confucius?

4. What might happen to her if she failed in this purpose?

5. Why was a young girl not considered a permanent member of her family?

6. At what point in their lives did Asian women have the most power?

7. How are bound feet a symbol of worthlessness?

8. Why didn't girls in China share the same education as boys?

9. Summarize in your own words the four virtues for women from Pan Ch'ao's *Lessons for Women.*

10. What was the purpose of this kind of education for girls?

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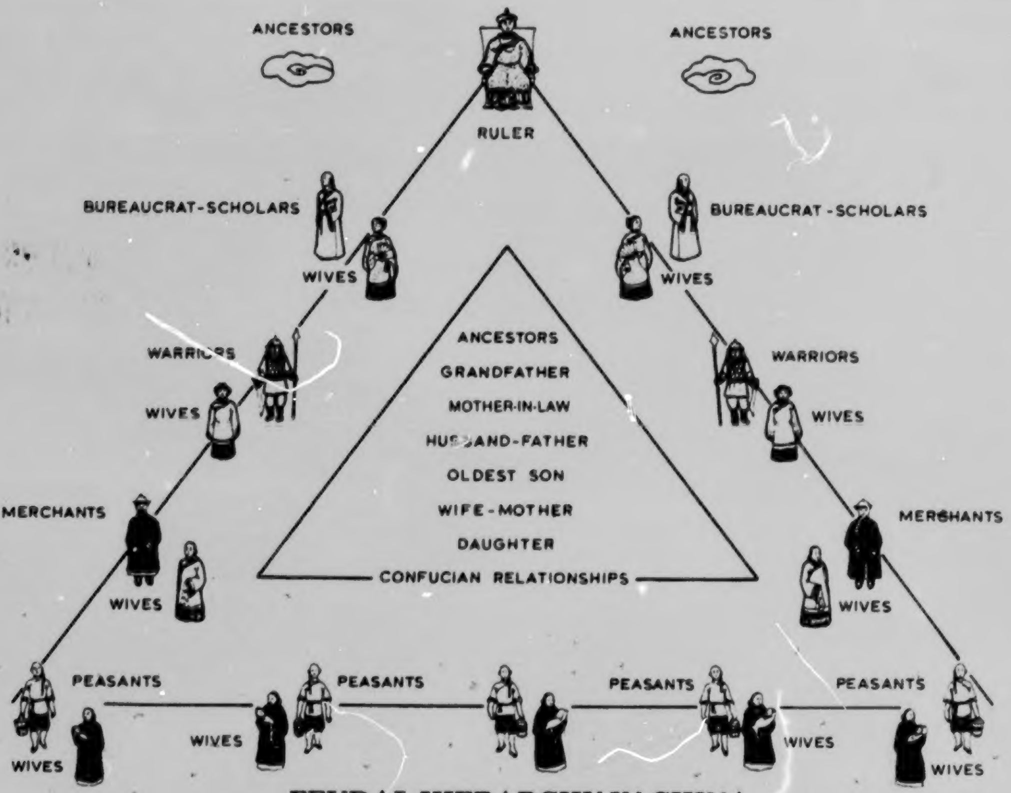
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FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN CHINA

FEUDAL HIERARCHY IN CHINA

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Who are the people shown on the chart who are respected and worshipped above all others?
2. Who has the greatest authority in the family?
3. Who has the greatest authority in the government?
4. Which group of people does not receive any respect or loyalty from anybody?
5. How can you tell this hierarchy is patriarchal?
6. In each level who are the inferiors?
7. Who has a position of power and respect even though she is a woman?

AH AO*

The young girl peeked out from under the bed. She had been hiding there since early morning. It was hot and stuffy. She could hardly breathe.

Ah Ao could hear her mother moving around in the kitchen. She was serving a feast to the men of the village. There were more than thirty men, some of them from neighboring villages. The men gorged themselves, stuffing food in their mouths and helping themselves time after time from the bowls of wine. The sounds of their noisy eating and drinking filled Ah Ao's heart with misery.

Her mother, Widow Wang, had mortgaged their house[1] to give this dinner. The widow counted on this meal to save her daughter's life. She had spent every cent she could raise to buy food and drink to serve her guests.

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*This story was simplified and condensed by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on "Ah Ao," by Sun Hsi-Chen, in *Living China*, by Edgar Snow.

[1] The other half of the house had already been mortgaged to provide a proper funeral for her husband.

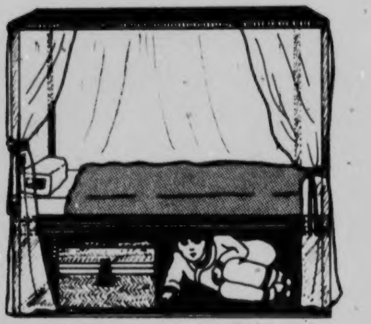
As they ate, it seemed to Ah Ao that these men were eating the very flesh from her mother's bones and drinking her blood. How would this poor woman survive after the meal was over? Even if her daughter's life was saved, what would become of her? This dinner meant ruin for the widow. She had no plan for survival afterwards. What made her do this?

Widow Wang was sacrificing for a crime her daughter had committed. There was no other way to save the child's life. It took two to commit the crime, but only one had to be punished. By Chinese customs, her daughter could be insulted, beaten or killed. Her lover, a young man from a nearby village, was not considered guilty.

"Eat. Eat!" yelled one fat villager as he pushed a piece of meat into his mouth. "This is a free feed. No return meal has to be given."

"Yea, the more girls like Ah Ao the more free meals!" said another. "I hope we have others like her. Only, why did she choose a man from another village? Why not one of us?"

Widow Wang pretended not to hear this coarse talk. She was waiting to hear what the important men of the village had to say. But, poor Ah Ao heard, and she crawled farther under the bed.

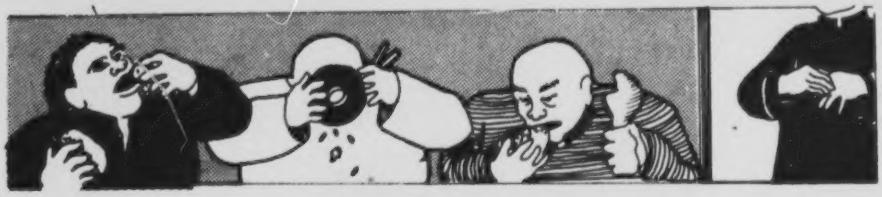


"This is a serious matter," said Wu the Merchant. "The girl has shamed the whole village. The proper punishment for such a crime is death. Remember the Chao girl from Stone Gate Village? She was beaten to death and buried without a coffin. She committed the very same crime!"

"Yes, Widow Wang," said the Village Elder, "this is very serious. It seems to me that you yourself may be responsible. Perhaps you were not virtuous in an earlier life. It's not altogether the girl's fault."

This gave the mother hope, and she spoke up bravely. "Yes, Honored Elder, that is correct. If she did wrong, it was really my fault. I know she deserves to die for this terrible crime, but—please—spare her life!" And the widow broke into tears.

Everyone remained silent. They waited for the elders to answer such a bold request. Ordinarily, the woman would be refused. But they had all eaten at her table. By eating her food, they had given her reason to ask for mercy.



Now, they waited for the opinions of Wu, the Merchant, Chin, the Rich, and the Hairy-headed Elder. Finally Chin gave the verdict.

"It is true that death doesn't begin to cover up the crime. Little is to be gained by taking her life. The guilt has been admitted. Now, Widow Wang asks for mercy for her daughter. She wishes to save her dead husband's face—to wipe the shame from his name. That is possible. However, we cannot allow such a shameful woman to stay in the village. She must go at once."

The Elders agreed. "Let her be gone by dawn tomorrow!"

Now the men got up from the tables and left, their stomachs full, their consciences pure. They had just rid the village of a terrible evil. A young girl has been banished for making love to a man before she was married!

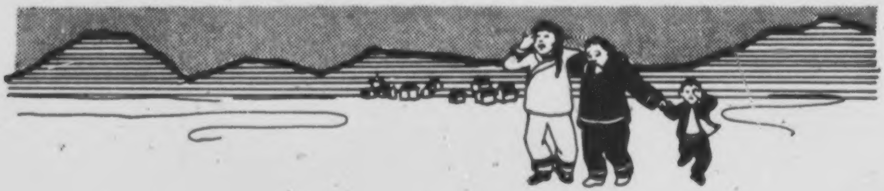
To the girl hiding under the bed, the verdict was almost as harsh as death. How could she live away from her mother and brother? Where would she go? She put her face in her hands and sobbed. Where was her young lover? Why hadn't he come to her defense?

Suddenly she heard the sound of a woman shrieking in a loud voice, "Miserable woman. You shameless mother and immoral daughter! You have seduced my son. He is ruined! My pure, good son who knows the teachings of Confucius." Ah Ao realized that it was her lover's mother.

The woman tried to reach the Widow Wang to attack her. The village women, who had come for their share of the feast now that the men were finished, restrained her. But she allowed herself to be brought inside. Here she ate heartily, even while muttering, "Immoral woman!"

After all the guests had gone, the widow called to her daughter. Ah Ao was so stiff from lying cramped so long that she could hardly stand. Her mother looked at her sadly. "See what you have brought upon yourself. I can do nothing more for you. You must now take care of yourself. Be strong, my daughter." The girl sobbed as her mother gently put her arms around her.

Before the sun was up the next morning, Widow Wang and her son and daughter walked in silence to the edge of the village. The mother kissed Ah Ao goodbye. She stood and watched as her daughter disappeared from sight.



AH AO

STUDENT ACTIVITY

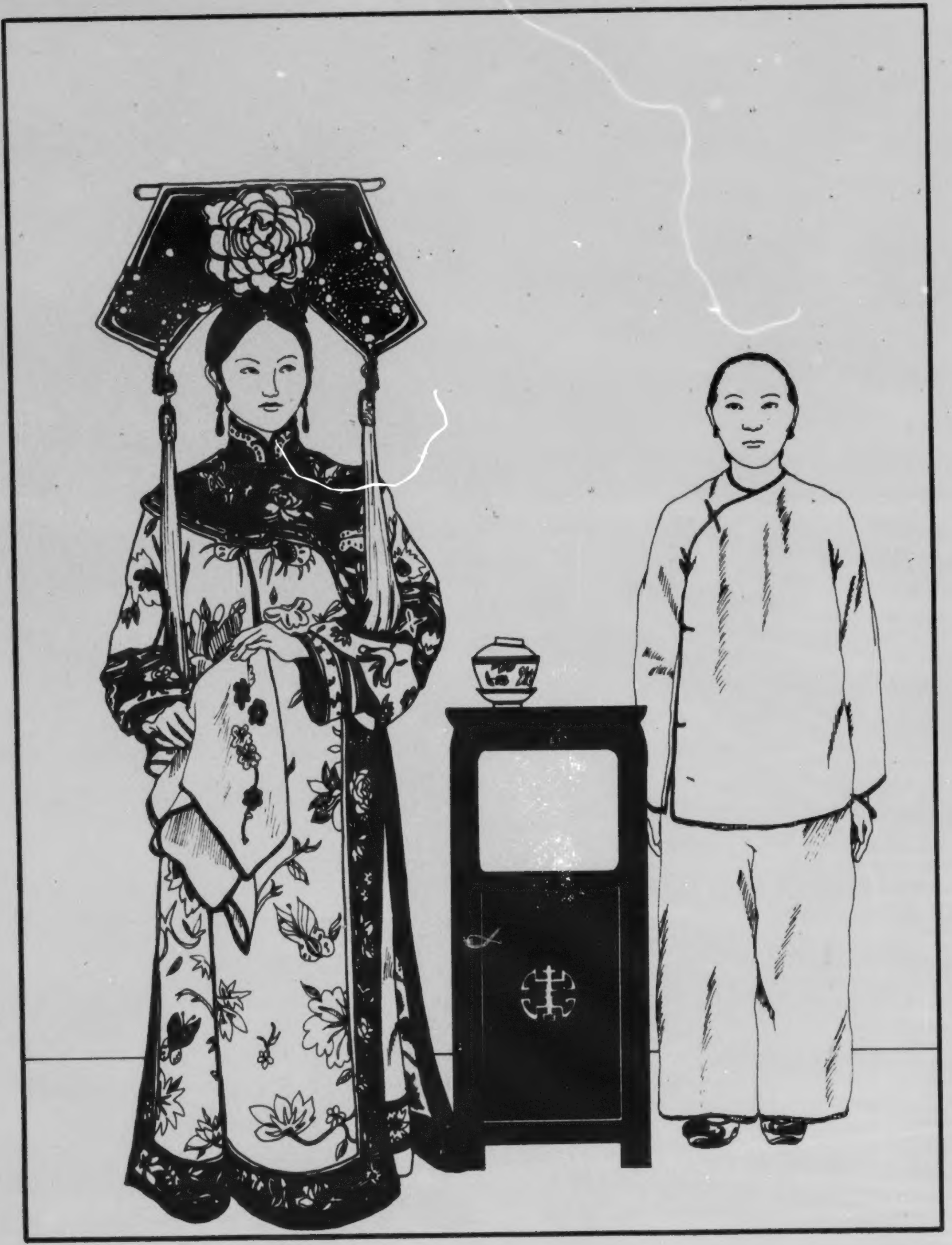
After you finish reading the story "Ah Ao," answer these questions.

1. What incidents in this story show that men have a position of power?
2. What was the "crime" Ah Ao was being punished for?
3. Why were the villagers more concerned about Ah Ao's part in the "crime" than in her lover's participation?
4. Why was this considered a criminal offense?
5. What is meant by "saving her husband's face"?
6. Why did that argument help the Widow Wang get sympathy from the men?
7. How did Widow Wang show strength of character?
8. Where do you think these people belong on the chart "Feudal Hierarchy in China": Ao Ao, Widow Wang, Merchant Wu?
9. Have you heard recently of such extreme punishment for this behavior anywhere in the world?

SPECULATION ON THE FATE OF AH AO

Use the background information in "Women in the Chinese Patriarchy" to support your answers to these questions. Give reasons for your answers.

1. What do you think happened to Ah Ao after she left her village that early morning?
2. What do you think became of Widow Wang after she said good-bye to her daughter?
3. Did Ah Ao, the Widow Wang, or Bertrande Guerre have other choices of behavior?



CHINESE CHARACTERS TELL A STORY

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WOMEN AS WORKERS

Chinese women were dependent for support on their husbands. Most wives spent their entire lives inside the walls of their household, while the men worked outside in the fields or in the village. Very few women worked in the fields with their husbands except in southern China. This was usually seasonal work and done only when absolutely necessary.

It was in the house that women were very productive:

> *Providing meals did not simply mean cooking; it could include the gathering of fuel, the drawing and fetching of water, the husking and grinding or polishing grain, and the preserving of glut vegetables and fruits. The processing of grain was often spoken of by women as the heaviest of their tasks.*[1]

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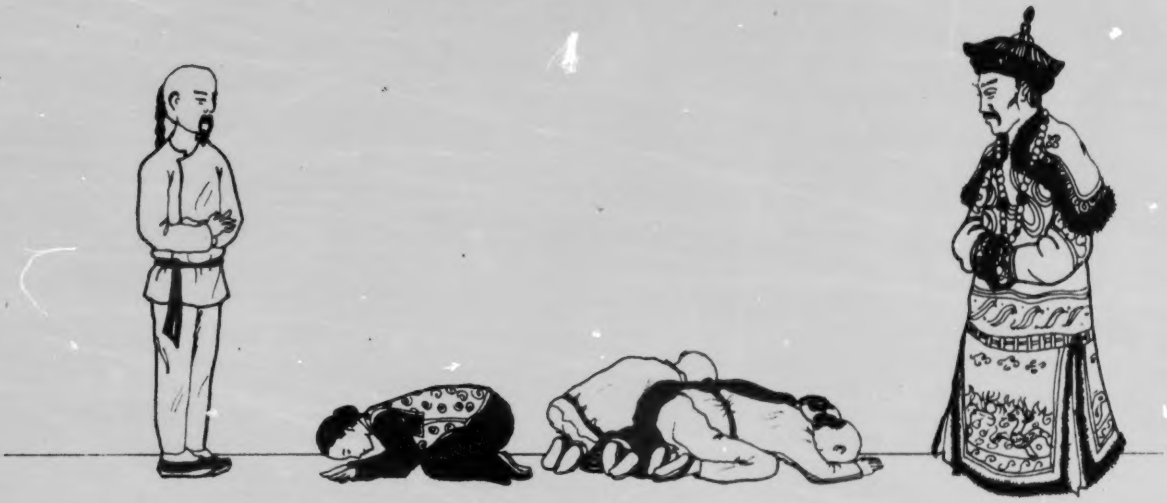
[1] "Women in the Countryside of China," Delia Davin. Paper presented for the Conference of Women in Chinese Society. San Francisco, June, n.d., p. 18.



In some families, the women made bean curd and fermented alcohol drinks, and prepared tobacco leaves for men's pipe smoking. Women also made shoes and clothes, even spinning the thread and making the cloth. Even though this was productive work essential to the survival of the family, women received little recognition for their efforts. Their work was seen as an obligation, and the "fee" they paid for protection.

Many women from poor families had to leave the home to work for money. This was called "going out" and included midwifery, matchmaking, foot binding, domestic work and prostitution. Poor peasants sometimes were forced to sell their daughters as slaves to work in other households or as concubines. In those instances where women did work outside their home, there was usually some acknowledgment from the family of the value of their work. For example, the mother-in-law would cook, care for the children, and do the chores usually only done by younger women.

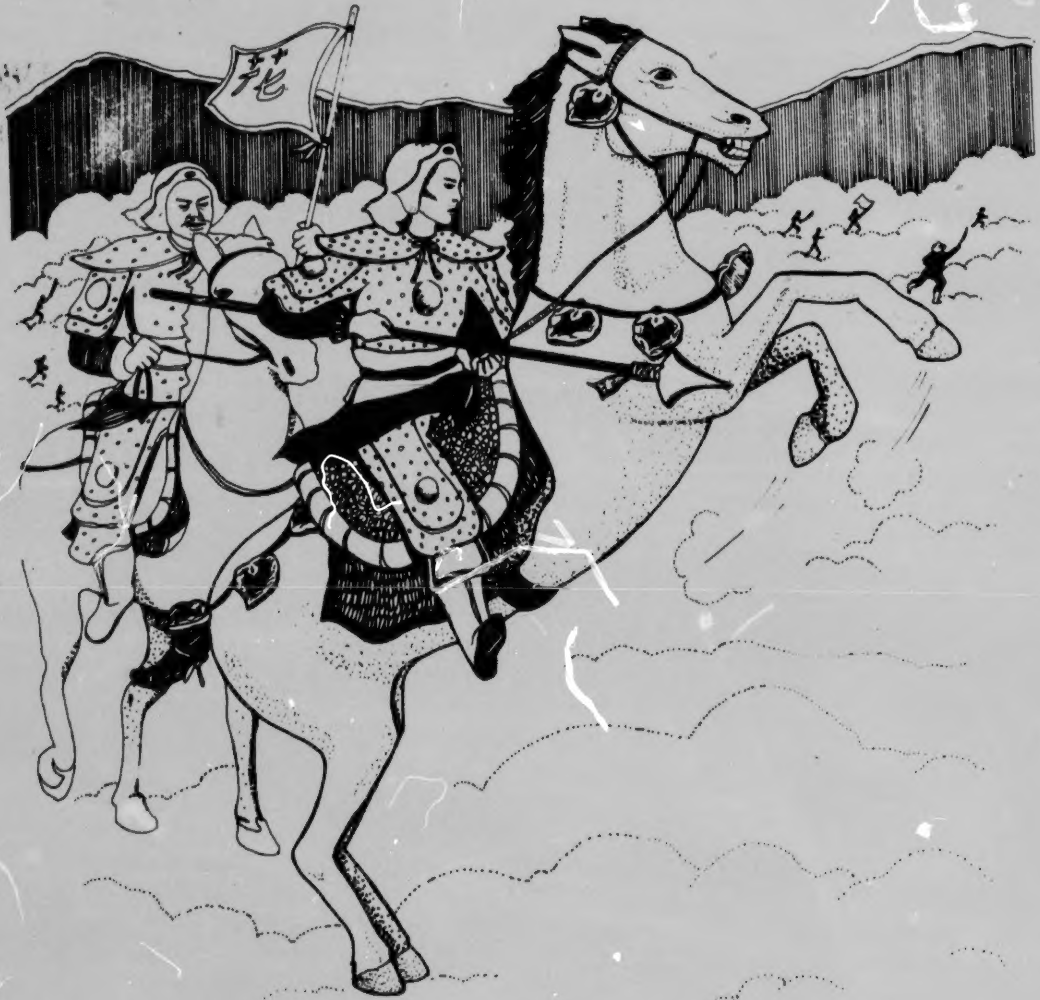
Upper-class women rarely left their homes. They had servants to shop for food and to run errands for them. Many of these women longed to go visiting or even stand in a doorway and observe their neighbors. But standing in the doorway was forbidden for proper ladies.

Although most of these women had servants, they had the responsibility of managing the household. In this respect, they had a great deal of power as they became mothers-in-law. As their sons brought wives to live in the house, they could supervise their daughters-in-law. Even the men in the family respected the "Dowager Mother," as the oldest woman in the house was called.

WOMEN AS WORKERS

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. List several ways women in China were *producers*.
2. Where did the productive work of most women take place?
3. What were the jobs some women had outside of the house?
4. Which jobs for women were the poorest in terms of respect from the community?
5. What was the most powerful position a woman could ever achieve in the family hierarchy?
6. Why do you think women were forbidden to stand in the doorway?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HUA MU LAN
THE WARRIOR WOMAN

In this legend of old China, the real-life heroine, Hua Mu Lan, represents the idealized woman who heroically overcomes difficulties through her own resourcefulness and skill. Although women were oppressed by the patriarchal society, they were expected to respond to crisis situations with intelligence and courage. They were not looked upon by society in general as helpless, but were expected to join their men as warriors in defense of family and land.

Although Hua Mu Lan's behavior was nontraditional, the fact that she was acting in her father's behalf makes her a popular figure. Her skill at martial arts was not as unusual as it might seem. Because a girl's life with her own family was of such short duration, upper-class fathers sometimes indulged their daughters by allowing them to participate in the same educational process as their sons. Hua Mu Lan must have enjoyed such a privilege, since she was skilled not only in the traditional female arts but also in the martial arts.

Hua's father was an officer in the army during the Wei dynasty, 385-535 A.D. So from the time she was a child she learned all the fighting skills. She got to be very good. One day when she was sitting at home weaving, like all girls did then, a messenger came from the Emperor commanding her father to raise an army to fight bandits.

At that time there was a lot of trouble with the Nomadic tribes on the Northern Border. But her father had spent all his life on the battlefield. He was then very old and sick and could not possibly go to war again. In old China when someone was called to fight and could not go, he could find someone else to go for him. But the only son in the family was Hua's little brother, and he was too young. The family was worried and did not know what to do.

Hua decided she would go into the army for her father, but her parents would not give her permission. So she secretly changed clothes and put on her father's army uniform, and came to the front gate.

Her father saw a young, handsome officer, and thought it was someone from the village who had also been drafted. He never guessed that it was his own daughter. Then Hua took off her helmet and her hair fell down and he recognized her. So then her parents gave her permission to go. Hua was then 17 years old.

Hua Mu Lan fought on the border for 12 years. Because she was very brave and skillful, she was made a general. She was very popular and well liked by the soldiers. But no one knew that she was a girl.

At the end of 12 years of fighting the trouble was almost over. There was peace with the tribes again. Because Hua was such a good general, the Emperor wanted her to stay in the army and fight someplace else. But Hua said she must go home to take care of her old parents, so she could not accept. The Emperor rewarded her with many presents and commanded the other officers from that army to take her home in honor.

When she got home she changed into her girl's clothes again. No one recognized her. None of her friends from the army could believe that this pretty woman was the same brave general who had fought like a tiger beside them for 12 years. Later, she married one of her "fellow soldiers" from the army.

HUA MU LAN
THE WARRIOR WOMAN

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. How did Hua Mu Lan's education differ from that of most Chinese girls?

2. What did she do that all girls did?

3. Why didn't Hua's brother go to the army in her father's place?

4. What kind of relationship must have existed between Hua and her parents? Was this something that the average girl in the average Chinese family could do? Explain why Hua was able to accomplish this feat.

5. Study the illustration. What elements of patriarchal custom can you find there?

6. Do you think it will ever be possible for women to lead armies as women, rather than disguised as men?

LETTER TO A DAUGHTER IN FEUDAL EUROPE*

Girls learned very early in life what was expected of them. They heard conversations among the women of the household. They were taught by the priest to fear the eternal damnation which would result from sin. Young women were given very specific rules about their behavior as wives. Here is a mother's farewell letter to her daughter on the eve of her marriage.

My Dearest Daughter,

I beg you not to be upset because I have given you in marriage. Your husband might be angry if you show your sorrow. Our family honor demands that you should be married and have children.

Now you must go from the rule of your father to the rule of your husband, thy lord, to whom you owe companionship, service and obedience. Here is some advice for you.

— Avoid doing or saying things which make him angry. If he is in a cross mood, do not joke with him. Leave him until he feels better.

— Learn what he likes to eat and serve it. If you do not like that kind of food, pretend that you do, because a wife should conform to the tastes of her husband.

—Be very careful with his money and his possessions. Do not lend his things or be wasteful.

—Keep all the secrets of your husband. Do not talk to others about what goes on in your house.

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* ***Women of Florence, Isidoro Del Lungo,*** Translated by Mary C. Steegmann, pub. by Chatto and Windus, London MCMVII, 1907.

> *—Keep yourself neat and clean and attractive, but do not use a lot of makeup or jewelry because your husband might be suspicious of your intentions.*
>
> *—Do not be a gadabout. It is the woman's duty to attend to the affairs of the family and the household. The man must go out a great deal in order to conduct his business. It is better to talk very little, and thus be considered very wise.*
>
> *—The most important commandment is do not do anything in deeds or words to make your husband jealous. Show him all honor and reverence, whatever may happen. Whenever he returns home, always give him a kindly reception, and treat his relatives better than you treat your own.*

Then, the gentle mother blessed her loving daughter and made the sign of Holy Cross upon her, saying, "And if you do all these things, you will be your husband's crown of gold."

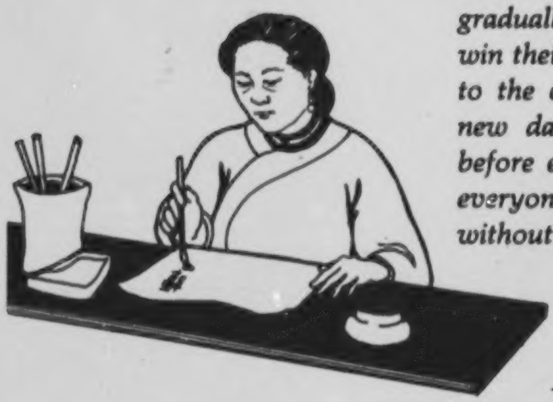
LETTER FROM A CHINESE MOTHER*

The following is an imaginary letter based on the feudal codes for women of China. It is written by a mother to her daughter who is being married. It is filled with what was then considered "good" advice.

Dear Daughter,

Soon, you will begin the second stage of life for women. You will pass from the authority of your father to that of your new lord, your husband. As we have taught you to be obedient to your father, so you must now be obedient to your husband. Never contradict his orders. He must be like heaven to you.

You must remember to be gentle and obedient, faithful and quiet. Your new parents-in-law will now replace your own parents. Respect them and gradually they may come to accept you. You must win their respect through hard work and obedience to the correct conduct for women, especially for new daughters-in-law. You should get up early before everyone and go to bed late at night after everyone. Doing manual labor with a good will without thought to difficulty will help mold your



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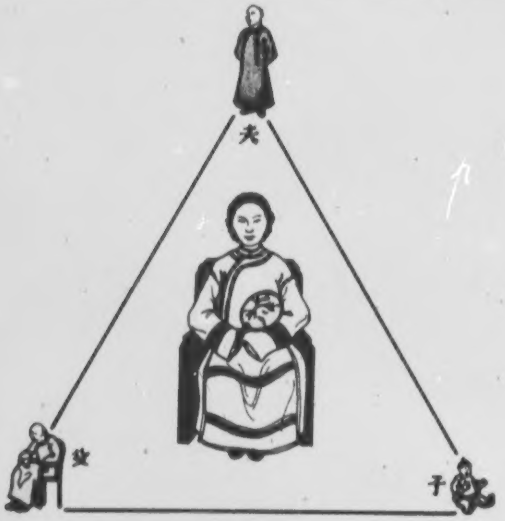
*Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.



character. Above all, do these things without thinking of attracting attention. Be modest in all conduct.

I hope you will soon give birth to a baby boy. Then, your importance to your husband and his parents will be assured. You will have been given a place in the lineage of their family. Then, when you are old, you will become the mother-in-law to his wife, and your old age will be filled with the duties of the third stage of woman's life—the obedience to and honor of your eldest son.

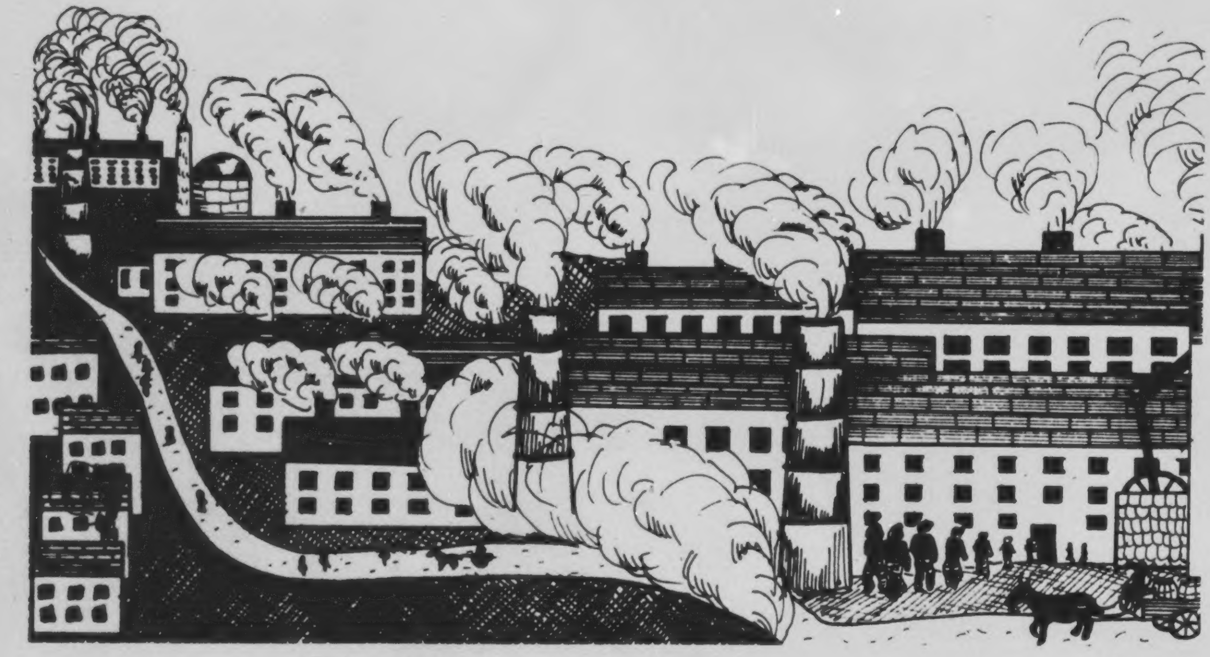
I hope you will remember these things. Women are prone to many defects, of which talking too much, jealousy, and disobedience are but a few. Think of the eternal shame on our family and on us, your parents, if you should have to leave your husband's house for such faults. Always be careful in what you do and say. Stay at home as much as possible, and carry out your duties cheerfully. It is said: The way of respect and humility is the first principle of wifehood.

If you follow these paths, your home will be peaceful, and you will live in harmony with your husband.

Your mother

UNIT 2

Women and the Industrial Revolution



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OUTLINE

I. **FOREWORD**

II. **INTRODUCTION**
  A. Teacher introduces the unit and the activity.
  B. Students read "The Industrial Revolution: Facts You Need to Know."
  C. Class discussion of fact sheet.

III. **WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**
  A. ESSAY ACTIVITY
    1. Teacher uses background essay, "Women before the Industrial Revolution," to introduce the topic to students.
    2. Students read essay, "Women before the Industrial Revolution."
    3. Teacher leads class discussion of essay.
  B. ILLUSTRATION ACTIVITY
    1. Teacher introduces the illustration, "Peasant Families in England before the Industrial Revolution."
    2. Students complete worksheet on illustration.
    3. Teacher leads class discussion on illustration.
  C. ORAL HISTORY ACTIVITY
    1. Teacher introduces the activity and reviews with students the procedure of the interview and the questions to be used in the interview.
    2. Students conduct interviews.
    3. Students compile interview information.
    4. Students share information from interview assignment in class discussion.

IV. **THE CREATION OF THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN**
  A. ESSAY ACTIVITY
    1. Teacher uses the synopsis and background essay to introduce this section to students.
    2. Students read essay, "The Creation of the Working-Class Woman."
    3. Students complete worksheet on essay.
    4. Teacher leads class discussion on essay and worksheet.
  B. READINGS ON WORKING-CLASS WOMEN
    1. Teacher uses background information to introduce the activities.
    2. Students read and discuss "Facts You Need to Know: Working-Class Women."
    3. Students, in groups, read assigned selections:
      a. "There Was No Place Else to Go: A Girl in the Mines."
      b. "I'm Not Complaining, Mum."
      c. "Be Brave and Work Hard."
    4. Students, in groups, complete worksheets on assigned readings.

5. Teacher leads class discussion on the stories.
6. Teacher assigns student activity.

V. THE CREATION OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN"

- A. ESSAY ACTIVITY
  1. Teacher uses the synopsis and background essay to introduce this section to students.
  2. Students read essay "The Middle-Class 'Ideal Woman.'"
  3. Students complete worksheet on essay.
  4. Teacher leads class discussion on essay and worksheet.
- B. THE FASHIONABLE LADY
  1. Class discusses the illustration of "The Fashionable Lady."
  2. Students read "What Did the 'Ideal Woman' Wear . . . and Why?"
  3. Students complete worksheet.
  4. Teacher leads class discussion on worksheet.
  5. Teacher assigns homework on the topic.
- C. THE REALITY OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS WOMAN
  1. Teacher introduces the topic and students read essay.
  2. Teacher leads class discussion of essay.
  3. Students read "Just between Us Men."
  4. Teacher leads class discussion of the reading.
- D. THE MIDDLE CLASS LOOKS DOWN ON THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN
  1. Students read the essay on the topic.
  2. Students complete worksheet on essay.
  3. Teacher leads class discussion of essay and worksheet.
  4. Students look at illustration, "The Ideal Woman and the Working-Class Reality" and complete worksheet on illustration.
  5. Teacher leads class discussion on illustration and worksheet.
  6. Students read letters "My Dearest Brother Albert" and "Prepare to Accept Woman's Destiny."
  7. Students complete worksheet following the readings.
  8. Class discussion of readings and worksheet.

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. MODERN-DAY EXPECTATIONS OF WOMEN
  1. Teacher introduces the activity.
  2. Students complete questionnaire.
  3. Teacher leads discussion of questionnaire.
  4. Students read "Where Did Our Expectations Come From?"
  5. Teacher leads discussion of essay.

B. ORAL HISTORY/STUDENT INTERVIEWS

1. Teacher introduces the activity and reviews with students the procedure of the interview and the questions to be used in the interview.
2. Students conduct interviews.
3. Students compile interview information on "Some Questions to Think About."
4. Students share information from interview assignment in class discussion.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

WOMEN AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

GOALS

Students will learn that:

1. **Because of the Industrial Revolution, economic production moved out of the household and into factories and industries.**
2. **The Industrial Revolution changed the nature and function of the household and family from the primary producer of the means of subsistence to the primary consumer of goods purchased by wages earned outside the home.**
3. **The Industrial Revolution changed what had been an economic partnership between wife and husband into an economic dependency of the wife on the husband's wage-earning abilities.**
4. **The Industrial Revolution created the supportive role of housewife and child rearer which become the "ideal" for women.**
5. Even though the "ideal" woman did not work, many working-class women had to work to supplement their husband's meager income.
6. The "ideal" middle-class housewife was the victim of double standards which kept her legally a non-person and made her socially and politically inferior to her husband.
7. Double standards of behavior restricted women's roles and activities, while permitting men to think and act as they pleased.

OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

1. Identify the primary economic unit in both pre-industrial and industrial economics.
2. Identify the changes in production from feudalism to industrialism.
3. Describe the nature of women's participation in the pre-industrial economy and the changes in that participation which occurred during industrialization.
4. Recognize the changes in the relationship between husband and wife which occurred as a result of the Industrial Revolution.
5. Define the "ideal" for women during the Industrial Revolution.
6. Compare and contrast the working-class wife's life with the life of the "ideal" middle-class wife and the life of the wife in pre-industrial society.
7. Describe some of the problems middle-class women faced legally and psychologically, including the double standards of behavior.

WOMEN AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
Foreword

In this unit we look at one of the most important changes in the economic, political, and social organization of human life—the Industrial Revolution. We will consider this topic from a new and somewhat neglected dimension—its effects on, as well as the contributions of, women.

The Industrial Revolution—a complex series of technical, economic, and political innovations—was instrumental in shaping the modern world. This is especially true of the status of women today. Whether we consider family life, the institution of marriage, sex-role stereotypes, or the position of women in the job market, almost every aspect of women's lives has been conditioned by the Industrial Revolution.

This unit shows how the Industrial Revolution shaped the lives of women. It uses England and Japan as examples demonstrating the effects of change on women that can happen in any country where industrialism occurs. We chose England because the first Industrial Revolution took place in that country, and England has been one of the most studied industrialized countries. We chose Japan because it is culturally quite different from England, yet it shows similar effects of the Industrial Revolution on women.

The unit is separated into three sections. They are:

I. ***Women before the Industrial Revolution***

Women in pre-industrial England and Japan are depicted within their families. The family as an economic unit is described primarily in relationship to women's status.

II. *The Creation of the Working-Class Woman*

This section demonstrates the changes brought about by agricultural and industrial revolutions. Students are encouraged to consider the changes working-class women underwent as economic producers and as wives and mothers.

III. ***The Creation of the Middle-Class "Ideal Woman"***

Students will look at one of the most important results of the Industrial Revolution—the creation of certain stereotypical models of womanhood. They will also analyze the effects of class roles, double standards, and economic dependency, on middle class women.

WOMEN AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
Introduction

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this section is to provide students with basic introductory facts about the Industrial Revolution. The main point to be emphasized is that the Industrial Revolution completely changed all aspects of human society and that among these changes were many for women—their status, roles, and economic importance.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. **Use the Foreword to introduce the unit and this activity to students.**
2. **Together with students, read aloud "The Industrial Revolution: Facts You Need to Know."**
3. **Lead the class discussion of the fact sheet, using the following questions.**

QUESTIONS to facilitate class discussion

1. Why do you think historians call the Industrial Revolution one of the greatest events in human history?
2. What do you know about the Industrial Revolution?
3. What do you know about the Industrial Revolution and women?
4. Can you think of aspects of your life today which are related to the Industrial Revolution?
5. Can you imagine what life was like for people of your age before the Industrial Revolution?

WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this section is to give students an understanding of what life was like, especially for women, before the Industrial Revolution. Also, this section will enable students to comprehend the enormous changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution and how much our society today is a product of those changes.

In presenting this topic, life before the Industrial Revolution, it is important to stress the fact that the workplace was in the home and that all household members participated in making the things needed to live. Women's work, such as cooking, tending the vegetable garden, and sewing, was an important part of the total productive work of the household. This provided a setting of partnership between the husband and wife since each was important to the economic well-being of the household and the rearing of the children.

This is not to say, however, that such an equality was necessarily recognized in the society, since legally, morally and intellectually women were considered subject to the mastery of men, especially when married. This inferiority, however, was tempered by the fact that most women were vitally important to home production, and through that, to society.

Teachers should note that subsistence farming, as was practiced by most peasants in England and Japan before the Industrial Revolution, should not imply an idyllic self-sufficiency such as is often portrayed in today's television and films. Life was wretchedly hard. Teachers should point out to students that there was no electricity, no internal combustion engines, and no steam power. There was no modern medicine and absolutely no understanding on the part of peasants about the uses of science and technology. It should be noted that in pre-industrial times much of science was considered heretical and those who engaged in research were subject to excommunication from the Church or even worse.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the background essay, "Women before the Industrial Revolution," to introduce the topic to students.

2. Together with students, read aloud the student essay, "Women before the Industrial Revolution."

3. Discuss with students the questions on "How Well Did You Read?" at the end of the student essay. Discuss the differences between pre-industrial and modern usage of these terms:

   household
   family
   housewife
   servant
   apprentice
   domestic economy

WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
Teacher Background

Before the Industrial Revolution the use of human productive power in small-scale pursuits, such as subsistence agriculture and small-shop crafts and trades, meant that the general level of economic production was very low. The result was a low standard of living for the vast majority of peasants and townspeople. This made life rather brief and brutal. Most people did not live much beyond 30. The great majority of children died in their first year. In fact, in some places it was common to baptize babies immediately after birth, but not to christen them with a name until the age of 1 since so many died in that first year. The life span for women was especially short since they often had 10 or more babies while continuing all their household work.

Today, we might want to romanticize the seemingly independent self-sufficiency of the pre-industrial peasant, but life was extremely harsh. Every day, except perhaps Sunday, was filled from dawn to dusk with backbreaking labor. Peasants did not know the word "freedom." Their view of the world was hemmed in by deep-seated superstitions and a general ignorance of everything beyond the village.

There was, however, a measure of equality for women in those times. Although they were considered morally, legally, and intellectually inferior to men, women in many ways were equal partners with their husbands in economic production.

This pre-industrial equality depended on a variety of factors in society rather than on laws and legislation.

Economic production took place in household units meaning that food, clothing, and any other necessities were produced almost entirely by household members for their own consumption. Any surplus could be turned into cash income. In this system, women played an extremely important role producing most of the food and clothing while men tended herd animals and served the landlord either in armed forces or by working the landlord's land.

Household tasks were economically productive. Such tasks as cooking and sewing had entirely different meanings from now. In pre-industrial times these tasks were the final stages in the economically productive work of household members. In post-industrial times they are the finishing touches provided by housewives on goods purchased by wages earned outside the home. In short, in pre-industrial times, women were producers rather than the consumers they have become in more modern times.

Households included many people besides the nuclear family. Relatives often lived together in one household. Servants and hired hands were included, usually young men and women who were learning the crafts and trades or farming in hopes of becoming household producers themselves. This allowed for household tasks to be spread out among many people, not just relegated to the housewife. In turn, men often did what is now considered "women's work." For instance, the husband shared the education of children with the wife. Children, in turn, often did useful work themselves. In these ways husband and wife were partners, each contributing to the well-being of household members.

During the last stages of feudalism, the growing trade of the time led to the rise of a large and prosperous middle class in the towns and cities. These were people who were either merchants buying and selling goods, or crafts and trades people who made the things in demand, such as fine furniture, beautiful wall-hangings and special foods.

Women often participated equally with men in these areas. In many English towns, for instance, a married woman who engaged in business by herself was regarded as a single woman in all that concerned her business and was not subject to domination by her husband.

In Japan, wives often helped their husbands who were peddlers and craftsmen. If a husband was ill or died, wives often took over the business, making and selling such things as bean cakes and umbrellas. Women were especially important to the economy in the Japanese fishing and mountain villages. In the fishing villages, women were in charge of tending and raising all land food crops while the men were out fishing. They then helped salt or dry the catch and took it to neighboring villages and towns to sell, being in charge of all money matters.

It was in the mountain villages that Japanese women were the most important. Besides raising the food crops and helping their husbands in the hard work of stripping and cutting up trees to be made into charcoal, women took charge of the entire process of raising silk cocoons and selling the precious fiber. In fact, women were so important, and their silk-raising and selling associations so dominant in the life of their villages, that these women were called "kakadenka" or "petticoat government."

Interestingly enough, these women, both in England and Japan, were looked down on by the writers of the day as being too unfeminine and coarse to be considered truly women. At the dawn of the agricultural revolution in England just before industrialization, Elizabethan writers wrote derogatory comments in many publications about women shopkeepers and peddlers. Their main criticism was that these women seemed to consider themselves the equal of men and of upper-class "ladies." Clearly, they did not know their proper place as women of the lower classes should.

In Japan, women from fishing and mountain villages were considered bad wives. Marriage go-betweens from nearby farming villages were often instructed to avoid investigating potential matches with women from those villages because they were too domineering and did not know their "proper place." The sight of women silk sellers and fish peddlers provoked Japanese commentators of the late 1700's to point out such women as examples of what women should not become.

As the Industrial Revolution progressed, women were among the first to be affected. When the guilds in England faced extinction because of industrial production or technical innovations, women were the first to be excluded as the guilds tried to save themselves. In Japan, the women silk raisers from the mountains became the first to follow their trades into the factories in the lowlands, as synthetic fabrics and mechanized weaving made their small silk-raising businesses uneconomical.

Small traders who did not have the money to invest in a factory or in new machinery then had to go to work in someone else's factory for wages. This meant that the wife no longer took such an important part in the economic life of her family or town. She was left at home. As the trades and crafts declined, domestic work at home became her main labor and most middle-class women became dependent on their husband's wages. Only later, after the Industrial Revolution had created new conditions and new relationships both inside and outside the home, would women become economically important again. This time, however, it was to be on a much larger scale and in a different way from before.

WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Illustration of Peasant Families in England before the Industrial Revolution

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this activity is to give students a visual interpretation of the pre-industrial English peasant family and its organization for production. The main intent is to have students realize that there was an essential equality between men's and women's roles in the labor of the household, including the sharing of some chores (such as child rearing) now considered to be exclusively "women's work."

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Together with students, look at the illustration, "Peasant Families in England before the Industrial Revolution." Discuss the illustration briefly, using the following questions.
    - Where did most of the people in England live before the Industrial Revolution?
    - What do you see the women doing? The men? The children?
2. Then assign students to complete the worksheet accompanying the illustration.
3. Discuss the worksheet together. Summarize the activity by discussing the following questions.
    - What do you think this picture shows us about the status of the woman before the Industrial Revolution?
    - How do these tasks compare with those done in families today?
    - How are the needs of the family met today?

WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The Changing Tasks of Family Members

Oral Histories/Student Interviews

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this assignment students will interview their parents and/or grandparents in order to

1. Understand if their family is engaged in any economic production at home.
2. Identify the kinds of chores expected in different generations of their families.
3. Identify those chores which are assigned on the basis of sex.
4. Compare the chores done within family households of this generation and the past two generations with the household work of the pre-Industrial Revolution peasant family.

If possible, students should try to interview their grandparents. Their responses will give a greater sense of the changes in family life.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. **Introduce the activity by using the above information to explain the purpose of the interview assignment.**
2. **Review with students the questions they will be asking the person they interview. Read the questions aloud together.**
3. **Review the oral interview directions with students, going over each item carefully to ensure that students understand the interview process and the need to be courteous and effective interviewers.**
4. **Allow students at least three days, or a weekend, to complete the interview assignment.**

5. Have students share the results of their interviews, using the following guidelines for discussion.

- Have the class report on the chores expected of their mothers, fathers, and grandparents, and the ways they made money outside the home. List these responses on the board using the headings *Male* and *Female*.

  Are there any big differences between the types of chores and jobs the girls and boys had to do? Why?

  Were females' chores and jobs assigned inside the home and the boys' outside?

  Did you find differences between those parents, or grandparents, who grew up in rural areas and those who grew up in urban areas? What could account for these differences?

- Using the lists of chores on the board for reference, have students discuss:

  What chores and jobs are similar to those you do today?

  What different things do you do?

  Are girls and boys doing new things today? Have expectations of what girls should do and boys should do changed?

- Have the class report on what their parents' families produced rather than bought. If students know about their grandparents' families, have them report on what those families produced rather than bought.

  Families for the most part are now customers, rather than producers. Can you think of anything your family produces for its own use rather than buys?

  Is there any evidence that families today produce more than they did a generation ago?

- Look at the jobs done by men and women in the illustration "Peasant Families in England before the Industrial Revolution." Compare the work of family members then with the chores done by the family members interviewed in this oral history activity.

THE CREATION OF THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this section we will study one of the basic processes of the Industrial Revolution, namely the agricultural revolution and its effects on women. We will concentrate on the dispossession of the peasantry and the move of the peasants into the towns and cities as the new work force of industry. This massive change in the organization of industrializing societies had profound effects on the status of women.

Teachers should stress the concept that industrialization removed economic production out of the household and into a society-wide system of economic production based in factories. This changed the meaning of women's household tasks (child care, house care, sewing, cooking, tending a garden) from one of economic productivity to one of consumption of goods bought outside the house with wages earned outside the home. Teachers should also stress that this destroyed the old economic partnership of the husband and wife, with the husband's wages earned outside the house now being the key factor in the survival of the family. The wife either remained at home with no important role to play in earning the money necessary for the family, or in the poorest working-class families, went to work herself to supplement her husband's income.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the following "Synopsis of Women before the Industrial Revolution" and the background essay "The Creation of the Working-Class Woman" to introduce the topic to students.
2. Read aloud with the class the student essay, "The Creation of the Working-Class Woman."
3. Have students complete the worksheet following the reading.
4. Lead a class discussion based on the questions on the worksheet.

SYNOPSIS OF WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

- Before the Industrial Revolutions in England and Japan, the great majority of the people lived in the countryside as agricultural peasants.

- Economic production was centered in the peasant household—a system called domestic economy. The household produced almost all of what it consumed. Any surplus was taken to market and bartered or sold.

- Wives worked alongside their husbands in this productive work. Since the workplace was in the home, household work was almost always related to productive work, including preserving the year's produce at harvest time and weaving cloth and sewing clothes from household-grown wool or flax. The wife was a partner with her husband in productive work. She was not just a consumer.

- Household work, such as child care and cleaning, were shared by everyone, including any servants or hired hands living in the household.

- Therefore, even if life was short and hard, and the work backbreaking, the women of pre-industrial times had more equality with men in many ways than in more modern times.

THE CREATION OF THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN
Teacher Background

A. THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

In all countries of the world where industrialization has taken place, the indispensable first step has been the revolutionizing of agriculture. Pre-modern agriculture was extremely inefficient, requiring large amounts of hand labor to produce barely enough to feed the laborers and support a few landlords, much less produce a surplus.

In order to develop and maintain an industrial economy, however, this old system had to change. Agriculture had to produce enough raw materials for industry and an agricultural surplus of foods in order to feed industrial workers. Land now became one of the bases of industrial production rather than the means of wealth for a few landlords.

As agriculture became more efficient, the *excess* agricultural peasants now became the new work force required by industrialization. Impoverished peasants streamed into the cities to work in the new mines, mills and factories.

THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION IN JAPAN
Land Reform

The specific methods by which the agricultural revolution is carried out vary according to the country involved. In Japan, the Meiji government, installed in 1868 by anti-feudal forces, engineered a land reform. The land reform accomplished two things at the same time:

1. The Meiji government converted the old feudal aristocracy into a new capitalist class overnight by compensating landlords for land by issuing them bonds from the new national bank. This assured the old aristocracy's cooperation in the modernization of Japan.

2. The land reform succeeded in driving thousands and thousands of peasants off the land and into the cities to become the new industrial work force.

The land reform did not create a class of independent small farmers in Japan. Because they were extremely poor when they received their parcels of land, most of the peasantry could not afford to purchase seeds, fertilizers, or draft animals. Many were forced to pay rent for the first time. This sudden need for cash drove many to borrow from moneylenders and banks at extremely high interest rates. This caused an almost never-ending spiral: the farmer without mechanization depended on having many children to help him work the land; in turn, the need to support so many people forced the farmer to live a bare hand-to-mouth existence. Thus the peasants were unable to save any money to improve their farms. The only way out for many Japanese farmers was either (a) to send a son to the cities or to America to work as a laborer or (b) to send a daughter to work in the new textile mills in the cities.

THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND

The Agricultural Revolution Began Early in England

England represents an almost classic case study of industrialization and the agricultural revolution. For a variety of reasons, the changes in English agriculture began several centuries before those in Japan. England's participation in international trade as early as the 15th century led to pressures within its economy to rationalize agriculture. Increased production of raw materials, especially wool, was vital to this trade.

Pre-Industrial Use of Land

Prior to this time, the use of much English land was collective, not private. The highest noble or the lowest peasant was entitled to use the commons for grazing, food crops or wood cutting. Because of his access to the land, the peasant could raise sufficient crops to provide his family with food, and wool or flax to clothe them. This freeholder, or yeoman, was the pride of England for his good health and sturdy independent spirit.

Enclosure of Land

As wool growing increased in commercial importance, land became too valuable to be used for the commons, at least from the point of view of the English aristocracy. The Tudor kings and landlords began a process called "Enclosure" by which they seized much of the commons and dispossessed many peasants and yeomen. The Enclosures created an army of unemployed people, many of whom roamed the countryside as paupers. The timing coincided with a rise in prices, a cut in wages and an increase in profits for merchants and landlords. Starvation, disease, and suffering were widespread.

Parliament, made up of only the landed gentry, passed a series of laws called Enclosure Acts which allowed landowners to fence in their lands and to destroy the cottages where the peasants lived. A guerilla war was carried on by the dispossessed who poached or hunted on the lands once used by everyone.

The Results of the Land Enclosure

From 1717 to 1820 at the close of the Napoleonic Wars, over 4,000 Enclosure Acts were passed involving the transfer of 4 million acres of land from collective to private use. Large-scale agriculture was in the process of being organized.

As the agricultural revolution gained momentum, the dispossession of the peasantry accelerated rapidly. This led to an explosive growth in working-class slums in the towns and cities and a rise in exploitation featuring lower wages, longer hours and worsening working conditions. Shanty towns appeared overnight. Fly-by-night builders threw up dark, cramped houses which are still to be seen in working-class neighborhoods in England. With no sanitation or running water, and little air or light, these slums became infamous in the novels of reformers of the times. Into these squalid and miserable conditions thousands upon thousands of peasants moved in a desperate attempt to replace their lost homes and livelihoods in the countryside.

B. THE EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION ON WOMEN

Japan

Historically, this early period of industrial growth in all capitalistic industrialized countries has been noted as a time of unprecedented brutality and exploitation of women and children. In Japan, young women of poor peasant families were lured into the city textile factories with glowing promises of company-provided dormitories, meals and health care. What they found was quite different. A room 10 feet by 10 feet would hold eight or nine or more women. Work hours could often go to 16 per day, with only a half-day off on Sunday. Meals consisted of poor rice or barley in meager quantities, with little else. The factories themselves were cramped and poorly lighted, and had no safety measures for workers. Most of these young women did not last more than a year or two in such conditions. As soon as they became ill, they were sent home to their families. The effects of the Meiji land reform, however, were so widespread that employers had no problem finding replacements immediately.

England

Young Englishwomen fared little better than their Japanese counterparts. The majority went to work in domestic service in the homes of the wealthy, or more likely, the growing middle class. Their working conditions, pay and hours depended entirely on the whim of the mistress of the house. Whatever she required in the way of extra hours for guests or extra duties had to be done. Even a minor infraction of the rules was cause for dismissal. Typical maids earned only pennies a day, so such a job was seen more as a way of insuring food and lodging for a young girl than as income for a poor family.

Those who worked in the mines and factories of England in some ways had a better job than those in domestic service. Generally, women industrial workers could count on a half-day off every Sunday, and a regular working day of 14-16 hours. Such jobs, however, were extremely hard and dangerous. Those who worked in the mines often suffered disease, crippling injuries or death.

EFFECTS ON CHILDREN OF MOTHERS WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME

Because of poverty, working-class children enjoyed almost no childhood at all. Before the Industrial Revolution, children participated in household work. But with industrialization children from the age of 4 or 5 had to go out of the home into mines and factories, working the same hours as adults. Very small children were left in the care of "older" children, while mothers worked all day and into the evening. Without their mothers for nursing, infants were kept quiet by being given a rag soaked with gin or other alcohol or even laudanum, a type of opium. As a consequence, infant mortality took more than half of all babies in the first year of life. Women often gave birth to seven or eight babies in order for one or two to survive.

Young children often left home because there was not enough to eat. Beggar children crowded the streets in London and other British towns. Many resorted to stealing and sometimes took part in the numerous bread riots of those times. After one such bread riot, one observer watched the hanging of dozens of children, some as young as five or six, for having participated.

C. CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN

Because the household went from a unit of production involving many people to a unit of consumption involving only the nuclear family, the role of the wife changed. The wife became the sole person with responsibility for planning and carrying out all housework. The husband was no longer her partner, since he went out of the home to work. Most people could not afford to hire household help. Consequently, the wife had to do everything. Furthermore, her role entailed only those duties which prepared things for consumption. Instead of sewing cloth woven by her and others in the household, she sewed clothes from cloth purchased with wages earned by her husband. Instead of cooking food raised on the commons, the wife cooked food purchased by wages. Instead of sharing child-rearing responsibilities with husband and servants, the wife became the main source of education, discipline and child care.

> ***The wife is no longer able to contribute her share towards weekly expenses . . . . In a kind of despondency she sits down, unable to contribute anything to the general fund of the family, and conscious of rendering no other service to her husband, except that of the mere care of his family.***[1]

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[1] From "Reports of Society for Bettering the Condition of the Poor," as quoted in Pinchbeck, Ivy. *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution*, pp. 58-59.

THE CREATION OF THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

Readings on Working-Class Women

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this activity is to give students an idea of what young girls, similar to their own age, had to do in order to live during the early years of the Industrial Revolution. Teachers should stress that the characters in the stories and their living and working conditions are typical of working-class young women of those times.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the background information above and the background information preceding each of the three readings to introduce this set of activities.

2. Read aloud, as a class, "Facts You Need to Know: Working-Class Women." Discuss the fact sheet.

3. Divide the class into 3 groups. Assign the following readings, each group of students being responsible for a reading.

   a. "There Was No Place Else to Go: A Girl in the Mines"
   b. "I'm Not Complaining, Mum"
   c. "Be Brave and Work Hard"

4. If the groups are very large, subgroups of 4-5 students each can be formed. In the subgroups, students will read the assigned selection and, working together, complete the worksheet accompanying each reading.

5. Lead a class discussion of the activity. Begin by asking a member from each of the 3 groups to describe the reading to the rest of the class. The student presenter should use the answers the group has worked out for the worksheet questions to assist in the presentation.

Then use the following questions to facilitate a discussion based on the information learned from the readings, the presentations and the group work.

A. QUESTIONS to facilitate class discussion

1. Where did young women and men get their training for work before the Industrial Revolution?

2. What kind of work did they do and *where*? (The *home* as the *workplace* is an important concept.)

3. What expectations for work did the young people in the readings have as they reached maturity?

4. **How did the Industrial Revolution change these expectations for young people (in terms of location, kind of work, wage labor rather than subsistence labor, separation from families)?**

5. For young women especially, what was their expected role after industrialization? What would it mean to these girls to marry and have children?

6. How have expectations for young women changed in today's society?

B. STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Take a poll of student expectations 10 years from now. What do students think they will be doing? As a parent? Spouse? Worker?

2. Assign students to write an essay describing one day's activities in their lives 10-15 years from now.

THERE WAS NO PLACE ELSE TO GO: A GIRL IN THE MINES

Teacher Background

In England before 1842 women worked alongside men in the coal and metal mines. Their labor, however, was distributed differently. Because women were smaller than men they were used to crawl farther into the earth to get the coal. Men were the colliers (diggers); women and children the lifters and haulers of the coal. Women were fast, good workers and were paid less than the men. Owners noted that it was cheaper to use women and children to bring out the coal than to purchase machinery. Women also were compliant. One mining foreman said, "Females submit to work in places where no man, or even lad, could be got to labour in."[1]

Coal mining was extremely hard. Work often entailed a twelve-to-fourteen-hour day. The pits were either very hot or very cold. Always they were wet. Often workers had to wade in knee-high water to their jobs. Brute strength and stamina were the necessary requirements for the hauling and trudging done by women and children in order to get the coal from the earth.

Children could start work as early as five. In Scotland girls were thought to be more efficient and able to care for themselves earlier than were the little boys. So they began their lives as miners at 4½ years of age. Girls this young were "trappers," which meant they opened and closed a little trap door which regulated the ventilation for the miners. The child had to sit alone in the dark for 12 to 13 hours a day. Although children's wages were low, poor families needed every bit to buy food. Also, the mothers knew they would not have the expense of child care while the children were working.

As the girls grew older, they were given different jobs to do. They collected loose coal into buckets and hauled it on their backs to the surface. When they were teenagers, they became "hurriers." The hurrier pushed or pulled the coal carts, or corves, usually along metal tracks, out to the main shaft where it was taken to the surface. The installation of metal tracks was considered an advancement over dragging the carts across the slushy ground.

Being a hurrier was hard work. The girls' bodies became deformed, as they had to stoop low to get through the tunnel-like spaces of the mines. Most were harnessed to the wagons with metal and leather straps which went around their waist and between their legs. The cart was heavy and there was a pressure on the hurrier to get the coal out as fast as possible. One woman said, "I have drawn til I have had the skin off me: the belt and chain is worse when we are in the 'family way.'"[2] But the real danger lay not in the pulling but at the time when the cart moved down an incline in the mine. If it went too fast the girl lost control of it and was crushed, sometimes fatally. Our story is about a girl who had to deal with these harsh realities in her work.

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[1] Pinchbeck, Ivy. *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution*, p. 248.
[2] Op. cit.

Young boys were employed as hurriers until they were old enough to dig. One miner said that women made better hurriers because "a lass never expects to be a coal getter, and that keeps her steady at her work."[1]

Older women worked even when they were pregnant, and many gave birth down in the mines. The poor physical conditions of these women influenced their babies at birth. Infant mortality was high. All babies suffered during these hard times because mothers had to leave their young ones with older children, sometimes only six or seven years of age, or with neighbors. Since food was scarce, babies were kept quiet by being given rags soaked in gin or laudanum, a form of opium, to chew on. This treatment left them dull and undernourished.

COAL MINE ACT OF 1842

In May 1842 a commission published a report on the condition of miners which aroused intense public indignation. Woodcuts showing women and children in the mines accompanied the report. It was not so much the hard physical work that shocked England in the days of Queen Victoria, but the fact that many male workers worked naked because of the heat and that sometimes the women stripped to the waist. Women were shown in loose trousers and with bare legs. The public responded to this seeming lack of modesty by saying that it was unfeminine for women to work with men and that it "undermined their modesty and self respect."

In 1842 Parliament passed a law excluding all female labor, and boys up to age 13, from work underground. Women and girls continued to work sorting and grading coal at the surface. By the mid-nineteenth century, harnesses also were not used except in small mines in the poorer regions.

Not all coal mining women, however, rejoiced in their exclusion from the mines. After all, they needed the work. Men from other poorer paying industries were not displeased as they went down and took the women's places in the mines.

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[1] Op. cit.

I'M NOT COMPLAINING, MUM
Teacher Background

For most of the 19th century in England, domestic service occupied more women than all other jobs combined. The British "nanny" or babysitter, the maid, and the cook became such a part of English life that films and television series such as "Upstairs, Downstairs" still reflect the experience of those times.

Women in domestic service in some ways suffered the most of all women who worked. Cut off from other workers, subjected to the whims of their mistress, and victimized by a rigid hierarchy of servants within a given household, women in domestic service eked out a bare existence. In fact, for most of the 19th century, wages were so low that the job was seen mostly as a way of guaranteeing oneself room and board rather than a livelihood. Disease and starvation, especially in the early part of the 19th century, were so widespread that working merely for subsistence must have seemed attractive indeed to the displaced peasants who poured into the towns and cities of England at that time.

It must be remembered that these women were in domestic service at a time when there was no electricity, no running water, no sewage system, no household appliances and few if any special cleaning agents to help in washing floors, clothes, etc. Irons were heated on wood-or more likely coal-burning stoves. Water also had to be heated on the stove. All other aspects of house work were done mainly by hand labor, making the job of a domestic servant backbreaking labor.

In addition, domestic workers had no guarantee of hours or time off. If the mistress of the house planned an evening with guests, servants were expected to handle all that plus the usual household routine. Days off could be cancelled at a moment's notice if the mistress of the house required something to be done. In addition, servants had no rights to bring over their own guests or to go out visiting without the mistress' permission. Thus, some servants remained cloistered in the household without any contact with others beyond their place of employment.

Servants also had no job security. If the family moved elsewhere or their mistress or master died, they were often left with nothing. They could also be dismissed at any time without notice. With so many unemployed and poor in Britain, replacement of servants was no problem for the wealthier families.

BE BRAVE AND WORK HARD
Teacher Background

At the time of the Meiji Restoration in Japan, almost 80% of all women were farm women living in peasant households, much as described in Unit 1. As the land reform progressed, however, the situation changed dramatically within a few years.

The first women factory workers were in spinning shops set up by the government to give earnings to displaced members of the warrior class. More women, however, went to work in official service as teachers, stenographers, doctors and nurses. It was not until the rise of the textile industry in the cities after around 1800 that masses of women went to work in a factory setting.

Industrialization in Japan was such that true heavy industry, such as steel making and machine manufacturing, did not begin until about World War I. Consequently, women in the textile industry made up the majority of the entire industrial work force in Japan until the 1920's. The existence of hundreds of thousands of factory women workers, nevertheless, did not change the social position of women in Japan at all.

Women workers were usually paid one-third of men's wages for exactly the same work. Women textile workers were terribly exploited, living in **crowded and unsanitary dormitories, and toiling for 16 hours a day. In fact, conditions in Japanese textile mills were quite similar to those in American mills in the early 19th century in New England and the Atlantic seaboard. Some mills, such as the Lowell mills in Massachusetts, were especially infamous for their bad working conditions.**

Women's social position was also handicapped by the existence of legalized prostitution, a legacy of feudalism which was not abolished until 1958. As long as prostitution was a legal business, the degradation of women had an official sanction. For women, also, prostitution appeared as an alternative to employment in the mills with their harsh working conditions.

For those who went into the mills, life was extremely cruel. The girls were lured into the mills by the so-called benevolence of the mill managers and owners, who promised naive peasant parents that they would be personally responsible for looking after the welfare of their daughters. The old feudal traditions of obligation and respect for one's superiors often made peasant parents feel obligated and grateful to the labor recruiters for having found their daughter a position in a factory which, with its promised money income, might save the family from bankruptcy on the farm.

The girls, also, felt the same way and were admonished by their parents to respect the factory owners as their superiors and do good service by working hard and bearing any difficulties without complaint. For most of these young women, organizing or complaining about working conditions would be tantamount to showing ingratitude. Such a lack of manners would have reflected badly on their families. The young women were also acutely aware that their families were depending on them to make enough money to help pay debts on the farm. In such a situation, then, it is not remarkable that most attempts at organizing these young women failed until the 1890's.

THE CREATION OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN"

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the following "Synopsis of the Creation of the Working-Class Woman" and the background essay, "The Middle-Class 'Ideal Woman,'" to introduce the topic to students. (See also the "Synopsis of Women before the Industrial Revolution," in the previous section.)
2. Read aloud with the class the student essay, "The Middle-Class 'Ideal Woman.'"
3. Ask students to complete the questions following the essay. Their answers should be discussed in class.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

The purpose of this section is to understand the forces leading to the creation of the middle-class "ideal woman" of the Industrial Revolution, and to consider those aspects of this ideal which remain with us today and influence our thinking about women.

The middle class of the Industrial Revolution came into being partly through the purposeful exclusion of women from the middle-class crafts and trades. These crafts and trades people, as well as smaller merchants, were continually being threatened with extinction or at least a very diminished share of the market. The exclusion of women was an attempt to raise the income of those remaining by restricting competition. The assumption was that the man, as head of the household, should work and be able to support his entire family. The wife was considered extra competition and was not to work, but care for house and children. From this developed the middle-class "ideal woman," who did not work but helped her husband by staying at home.

Teachers should stress that the "ideal woman" did not work but depended on her husband not only for income but for status as well. This dependency accentuated the legal, moral and intellectual inferiority of women inherited from feudal times. The middle class, however, thought that such dependency was similar to the leisure of the upper-class woman. In other ways as well, the middle-class woman sought to emulate the upper-class woman, even though she lacked the key ingredient of real wealth. Consequently, the middle-class woman tried to have at least 2 or 3 servants, dress fashionably, cultivate the finer arts and have a leisurely social life. At the same time, the middle-class woman looked down on working-class women for not having the ideal life.

SYNOPSIS OF THE CREATION OF THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

- The first stage of the Industrial Revolutions in England and Japan was the revolutionizing of agriculture.

- Land was converted from being the means of subsistence for peasants into a means of producing commercially profitable agricultural raw materials for trade and industry.

- Peasants by the hundreds of thousands were driven off the land and into the cities and towns to become the new industrial work force.

- As work moved from the household into the factory, women lost their position of economically productive partnership with their husbands. Husbands went outside the home to work for wages. Women could either go to work themselves, stay home, or become prostitutes.

- The women who went to work found jobs mainly in domestic service, mines, and textile mills.

- In these jobs they were terribly exploited. Working conditions were harsh and **pay for women was as much as 60% lower than for men.**

- Working women also had the added responsibility of caring for children and home. Working-class slums of those times were notorious for lack of sanitation and bad housing. When prices rose without corresponding wage increases, the diet of the working class became worse. Many families lived only on potatoes and weak tea and consequently suffered from disease, malnutrition and other sicknesses.

- Working-class women were employed by necessity because their husbands' wages were insufficient to support the family.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN"
Teacher Background

The development of the middle-class "ideal woman" was the result of complex social and economic forces resulting from the Industrial Revolution. Some of the major changes are summarized briefly here.

Effects of the Industrial Revolution on the Peasantry

The dispossession of the peasantry from their land led to their transformation into the urban working class. The great mass of people in both Japan and England were the peasants who became the new workers in the mines, mills and factories.

Effects of the Industrial Revolution on the Upper Class

The other side of the creation of the working class was the creation of a new class of extremely wealthy capitalists who joined the landed gentry of the upper class. These were the people who owned the factories, the mines and the mills. As the Industrial Revolution progressed, they came to control more and more of the economic wealth and life of Japan and England. Their lifestyles and activities, including those of the women of this class, were conspicuously different from those of the working poor.

Just as the kings of old arranged marriages to consolidate land titles, so the new industrialists and bankers arranged marriages to consolidate their fortunes, property and power. Marriages preceded by property contracts became the order of the day. To the capitalists belonged a life of real wealth, with fabled mansions and glittering parties and dances. In England, while men made decisions in the political and economic spheres that determined the future of that nation, the women presided over households of 25 or more servants at each of 3 or 4 homes scattered about the countryside. In Japan, walled castles of the old feudal landlords came to house the treasures of the new class of bankers and industrialists who engineered their country's entrance into the modern world.

Effects of the Industrial Revolution on the Middle Class

Not everyone, however, entered the Industrial Age as a member of either the working class or the upper class. During the feudal periods in both England and Japan, a middle class had emerged—associated with the development of the towns—and composed of independent craftspeople, merchants, and professional people. In that society, which was based predominantly on land as the basis of economic activity, these small traders and artisans were dealers in a limited market and in a limited money economy.

As the Industrial Revolution began in England and Japan, some of these urban traders and craftspeople were not absorbed immediately or destroyed by the new industries, and they continued to work much as they had traditionally. Goldsmiths, silversmiths, house builders are examples. Others, such as small-business owners and merchants, continue even into the present. None of these urban middle-class elements, however, could escape the larger dynamics of the Industrial Revolution.

Since it already participated in the money economy, the middle class seemed able to participate more closely in the new economic system which made money a more important factor in shaping everyone's lives. The possibility that they could rise into the upper classes and the new wealth always appeared tantalizingly close—with the many Horatio Alger type stories and examples. But capitalist industrialization was more than just the accumulation of vast sums of money. It was also the ability to turn that money into capital—that is, into an investment with the capability of reproducing itself time and again. Most of the middle class had no such wealth capable of controlling the economy. However, the illusion persisted that anyone could succeed at becoming wealthy.

On the other hand, the middle class forever teetered on the edge of the slums and darkness of the working class, as technological improvements swallowed craft after craft and periodic depressions wiped out smaller merchants. The aspiration for wealth, combined with the fear of becoming working class, marked the "in-between" nature of the middle class. It created the desire and need for the middle class to try to remain as distant as possible from the working poor, both in lifestyle and attitudes. Thus, the middle class, the nouveau riche, acquired and practiced contempt for the working class, which was unable to rise above its poverty stricken circumstances.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS WOMAN

In feudal times, the members of the middle class were artisans and small traders active in business life. Women participated in crafts and trades, sometimes taking over shops when their husbands died. Sometimes girls, especially daughters, were accepted into the crafts and trades as apprentices on an equal footing with boys.

As the Industrial Revolution began, however, women and girls gradually became excluded from the crafts and trades. The rise of factory production and large-scale trading and merchantry pre-empted the smaller trades and especially the handcrafts. By producing and marketing larger quantities of goods, the new capitalists were able to sell their items at a lower price. As the artisans and small merchants became less able to compete, the guilds, trying to protect their interests, began to exclude women. The assumption was that the artisan and merchant could survive the competition of the new capitalists if the price of their labor and their goods could be kept high enough for a man working alone to support his family. This goal was to be accomplished by the elimination of certain groups of competing guild members–for example, women.

Middle-class women in the urban areas were purposefully excluded from economically productive work in order to insure the survival of the male artisans and merchants. Gradually the assumption grew that such work was a man's prerogative. Although peasant women were also excluded from economically productive work because of the general dispossession of the entire peasantry during the first stage of the Industrial Revolution, there was no similar assumption that such productive work should belong only to men. The exclusion of the middle-class woman from work outside the home set the stage for the rise of the modern middle-class assumption that men are supposed to work outside the home but women are not.

In addition, the economic forces which produced a more affluent middle class also made it possible for the wives and women in the family to not have to work outside the home. The medium-sized merchants did establish a relatively affluent income level and were able to support their families without resorting to either child or woman labor. The fewer numbers of household members needed for productive, that is, income-generating work, became another mark of difference between the middle class and the working class.

The Emergence of the "Ideal" Middle-Class Woman

The social and economic factors described above led to the new lifestyles and attitudes which became embodied in a new set of ideas about the roles and behaviors appropriate to middle-class women. These can be summarized briefly as:

- The "ideal" middle-class woman was married and was economically dependent on her husband.

- This "ideal" for a woman meant cultivating talents and charm to catch and keep a good husband and help him succeed in his career while demonstrating proficiency in her assigned roles of child rearing and housekeeping.

- The reality of the middle-class woman, however, was that she was the victim of double standards which kept her legally a non-person and socially and politically her husband's inferior. This double standard, while derived from earlier times, became even more oppressive during the Industrial Age because the woman was now completely dependent on her husband with no independent productive role for herself in the family or society.

- The middle-class woman was expected to be innocent and pure in thought and deed, while the man had full sexual freedom outside the home. This created a situation which exploited the poor working-class woman, who was forced into prostitution.

- Because the "ideal" wife was not expected to work, poor and working-class women who had to earn a wage in order to survive were looked down on.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN" THE FASHIONABLE LADY

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

This activity is designed to help students understand how the image of the "ideal" middle-class woman developed and what the image was. One way students can understand the "ideal" is to study the fashions designed for her. A second objective of the activity is to expose students to the idea that fashion is not simply a matter of personal taste. Rather, fashion serves a social function: it reflects the roles, attitudes and behavior of people. Fashion has social content. During the Industrial Revolution, fashions for the "ideal woman" most often reflected the fact that she did not work.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Have students look at the drawing of "The Fashionable Lady."
2. Discuss together the following questions:
   a. What is the fashionable lady in the drawing wearing?
   b. Since the sewing machine was not invented yet, can you guess how many hours of hand labor went into making her clothes?
   c. Do you think this woman comes from the working class? Why or why not?
   d. Do you think she could work wearing that kind of dress? Why or why not?
   e. Compare the fashionable lady with the working-class women in the picture. What are these women wearing? Why?
   f. Do you like to wear clothes like the fashionable lady's? Why or why not?
3. Together with the students read "What Did the 'Ideal Woman' Wear . . . and Why?"
4. Have students complete the questions at the end of the reading, using the drawing as a reference. Discuss their responses to the questions.
5. As a homework assignment, ask students to bring in pictures, drawings or photographs from magazines and newspapers of current women's fashions. Discuss what these fashions mean today in terms of the "ideal woman" and what she is supposed to be like.

THE REALITY OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS WOMAN

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

This lesson is designed to help students understand that the reality of the middle-class woman was far from the ideal. First, the ideal created was not an example of a useful human being but an object to enhance a man's career and to bear his children. And as a result, the middle-class woman suffered psychological and even physical damage from feeling she should conform to the ideal role.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the topic to the students and ask the class to read aloud "The Reality of the Middle-Class Woman."
2. Lead a discussion of the reading, using the following questions.
   a. What are some of the laws which put the middle-class woman in her place of inferiority?
   b. What was the effect of excluding middle-class women from "real life"—the political and economic life of a society?
   c. What did inheritance have to do with the middle-class woman's reality?
   d. Can you list some of the things in our society today which might be related to some of the above realities of a hundred years ago?
3. Read together with students "Just between Us Men." Have students take the three roles in the conversation.
4. Discuss the reading using the following questions.
   a. What did these men think about having sons and having daughters? Why?
   b. What was their attitude toward their wives?
   c. Do you think these men respected their wives? Support your answer.
   d. Can you find any modern-day attitudes which are similar? Give examples.
   e. What do you think the wives might have thought about this? Why?
   f. See if you can construct an imaginary conversation among the wives of the men in this conversation. What would they say about their husbands and children? Why? What would they say about themselves?

THE MIDDLE CLASS LOOKS DOWN ON THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of these activities is to help students understand the reasons why the middle class regarded the working class with both fear and contempt.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. **Have students read aloud the essay, "The Middle Class Looks Down on the Working-Class Woman."**
2. **Ask students to complete the worksheet questions which follow the essay.**
3. **Lead a class discussion of the essay, using the questions on the worksheet.**
4. **Have the class look at the illustration of "The 'Ideal Woman' and the Working-Class Reality."**
5. **Have students complete the worksheet based on the illustration.**
6. **Lead a class discussion of the illustration, using the questions on the worksheet.**

   Summarize the discussion by asking the following questions:

   - **Compare this drawing to today's "ideal woman." What is the "ideal" for women today?**
   - **What is the reality for women today?**
   - **Is there a gap today between the ideal and the real as there was during the Industrial Revolution?**
   - **What similarities can you see in today's situation for women and that of England a hundred years ago? What differences?**
7. **Have students read aloud the two letters, "My Dearest Brother Albert" and "Prepare to Accept Woman's Destiny."**
8. **Ask students to complete the worksheet questions which follow both readings and then discuss their answers in class.**

MODERN-DAY EXPECTATIONS OF WOMEN: IS THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL" STILL WITH US?

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The following activity is designed to help students learn that the middle-class "ideal" of the Industrial Revolution is still very much with us, even though the majority of American women now work. This should help students understand that there are a variety of opinions about women working and that some of these opinions are similar to those raised during the time of the Industrial Revolution.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. **Use the information above to introduce the activity.**
2. **Have students fill out the questionnaire "Modern-Day Expectations of Women: Is the Middle-Class 'Ideal' Still with Us?"**
3. **Lead a discussion of the questionnaire in class. Guidelines for class discussion are:**
    a. Are students' expectations of women similar to those of the "middle-class ideal" during the Industrial Revolution?
    b. Can students identify the similarities?
    c. In what areas are students' expectations different?
    d. Can students think of events since the Industrial Revolution which have influenced their attitudes and which explain the differences?
4. **Have the students read aloud "Where Did Our Expectations Come From?"**
5. **Use the following questions to lead a discussion of the essay.**
    a. Can you think of other expectations of women which are based on the 19th century "ideal" woman? Give examples.
    b. Do you think these expectations are "natural" for women? Why or why not?
    c. How do these expectations affect men? For instance, what about men who enjoy literature and poetry or who are not athletic?
    d. Can you think of some better expectations for men and women? Give examples.

ORAL HISTORY/STUDENT INTERVIEWS

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this assignment students will interview a working couple with children—possibly their own parents. Students will learn why people today work, how and why people work and parent at the same time, and how spouses feel about each other working and parenting. Since there is such a great difference on these issues between today's middle-class reality and the middle-class practices during the Industrial Revolution, the teacher should use this contrast to help students understand the differences and the similarities in behavior and attitudes between the two periods. In this way, the teacher can use this activity to summarize the unit.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the activity by using the above information to explain the purpose of the interview assignment.

2. Review with students the questions they will be asking the persons they interview. Read the questions aloud together.

3. Review the oral interview directions with students, going over each item carefully to insure that students understand the interview process and the need to be courteous and effective interviewers.

4. Have the students conduct the interviews.

5. Allow students at least three days, or a weekend, to complete the interview assignment.

6. Have students share the results of their interviews, using "Some Questions to Think About" as a guideline for class discussion:

   - Describe any similarities you see between the way the husband and wife interviewed see their family and work responsibilities, and the way the middle class during the Industrial Revolution saw the same roles and responsibilities.
   - Describe the differences you see.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following references were found to be of special help in preparing a junior high school curriculum. There are many other worthwhile references available in any library about the Industrial Revolution and women in England from the 17th to 19th centuries. Materials on women in Japan are much more difficult to find in English. Except for the two references below, most materials are either not translated or are out of print.

Basch, Francoise. *Relative Creatures: Victorian Women in Society and The Novel*. Schocken Books, New York, 1974.

A fine combination of social documentary and analysis as seen by the great writers of the day. From Thackeray to Dickens to George Eliot to the political commentators of the day, the Victorian woman as seen by these writers makes for fascinating reading. This reference is especially useful for teachers using any of these authors in their classes.

Clark, Alice. *Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century*. E.P. Dutton and Co., New York, 1919.

Perhaps the most important description of the economic role played by women in England on the eve of the Industrial Revolution. Each chapter focuses on one aspect of women's economic role (crafts, trades, agriculture, professions) and describes the changes as England plunges into industrialization. Excellent description of the effects of the Enclosure Acts on women's status. Contains many quotes from original sources of that time.

Dower, John W. *Origins of the Modern Japanese States: Selected Writings of E.H. Norman*. Pantheon Books, New York, 1975.

The chapters "Early Industrialization" and "The Agrarian Settlement and Its Social Consequences" from E.H. Norman's book *Japan's Emergence as a Modern State* provide an excellent analysis of the agricultural revolution in Japan and its effect on the peasantry and the modern-day development of Japan. Limited, however, in details concerning women.

Dunbar, Janet. *The Early Victorian Woman: Some Aspects of Her Life*. George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., London, 1953.

A detailed description of the Victorian woman's life. Divided into aspects of the home (marriage, houses, servants, fashion) and the world outside the home (education, outstanding women), this fine volume contains many drawings, illustrations and quotes from the times.

Holcombe, Lee. ***Victorian Ladies at Work.*** **Archon Books, Hamden, Connecticut, 1973.**

A fine factual resource on the growth of "women's jobs" during the last part of the 19th century. These jobs each merit one chapter: teaching, nursing, store clerks, clericals and government civil service. The final chapter explores the rise of the feminist movement in Britain and its relationship to the realm of work for these Victorian women.

Koyama, Takashi. *The Changing Social Position of Women in Japan.* United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Paris, 1961.

One of the best sources in English on the history and post-World War II changes in the social status of women in Japan. Excellent discussions on the social position of women in the family, in the countryside and on the job.

Oakley, Ann. *Woman's Work: The Housewife, Past and Present*, Vintage Books, New York, 1974.

The chapters "Women's Roles in Pre-Industrial Society" and "Women and Industrialization" furnish good, detailed historical discussions of these important periods.

Phillips, M. and Tomkinson, W.S. *English Women in Life and Letters.* Oxford University Press, 1927.

A rich and lively account of English women during the 17th and 18th centuries, drawn mainly from letters, diaries, and firsthand accounts. Included are accounts by and about upper-class women, country and city wives, servants, criminals and professionals. Of special interest to those wanting material on women activists is the chapter on the 18th century bluestockings, an English women's literary group which spoke for women's rights.

Pike, Edgar Royston. *Golden Times: Human Documents of the Victorian Age*, Praeger, New York, 1967.

Contains 150 documents of the human side of the Victorian Age from 1850 to 1875. Taken from government publications as well as from articles of magazines and pamphlets, the book gives a feeling for the life of the working class. The chapter "Queen Victoria's Sisters" documents the life of women working as domestic servants in the needle trades, factories, mines and agriculture. The chapter "Home Sweet Home" documents living conditions and problems. The book has excellent illustrations from *Punch* and photographs from the British Museum.

Pinchbeck, Ivy. *Women Workers and the Industrial Revolution.* A.M. Kelley, New York, 1969.

Generally regarded as the definitive work on this topic. An analytical work, it contains an impressive compilation of facts and figures on women workers. The text is liberally sprinkled with quotes from commentators of the time and from documents which can be used effectively in class discussion.

UNIT 2

Women and the Industrial Revolution

WOMEN AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
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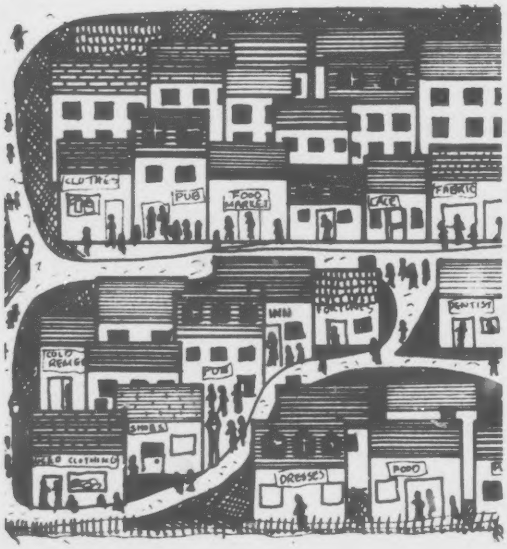
THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT WAS THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

The Industrial Revolution was a complete change in the way everything and everyone were organized to produce things. Before the Industrial Revolution, very few goods were produced. Most people had barely enough to eat and wear. The Industrial Revolution changed this. In a matter of a few generations, the way food and clothing, for example, were grown and made available to people completely changed.

Before the Industrial Revolution, food was grown on individual farms—and only as much as was needed by the individual family. During the Industrial Revolution, machinery was developed and large plots of land were made available, enabling the development of large-scale cash crop agriculture. The main purpose of producing food changed; the purpose became to sell what was grown.



In terms of producing clothing, the change was also dramatic. Before the Industrial Revolution, clothing was made to meet family needs and was produced in the home. The invention of looms during the Industrial Revolution meant that clothing was manufactured on a large scale in factories and was sold throughout the country.

Many other things in society changed. For the first time science and engineering were used systematically in all aspects of life. Important changes also happened in the home with families, in political systems, in laws, and even in marriages.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

The Industrial Revolution is a relatively modern event. Most Industrial Revolutions have occurred between 1600 and the present.

- England's began in the 16th century.
- Japan's began in the 19th century.
- In some countries it is still going on.

WHERE DID IT HAPPEN?

The Industrial Revolution has happened in many countries. We call these countries industrialized. An example is the United States.

It began in Europe, but every continent today has some nations which are in the process of industrialization.

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

The Industrial Revolutions we will study are the ones that occurred in England and Japan. Both of these societies industrialized in a "capitalist" way. That is, a small number of men with great personal wealth invested their money in the invention of machinery, the building of factories and mills, and the development of mines, as new and useful methods of increasing their wealth. The result was a complete change in the way goods were produced. Other countries, learning from the experiences of England, Japan and the United States have tried to industrialize in different ways. They have tried to industrialize without exploiting the working class, creating slums or degrading women.

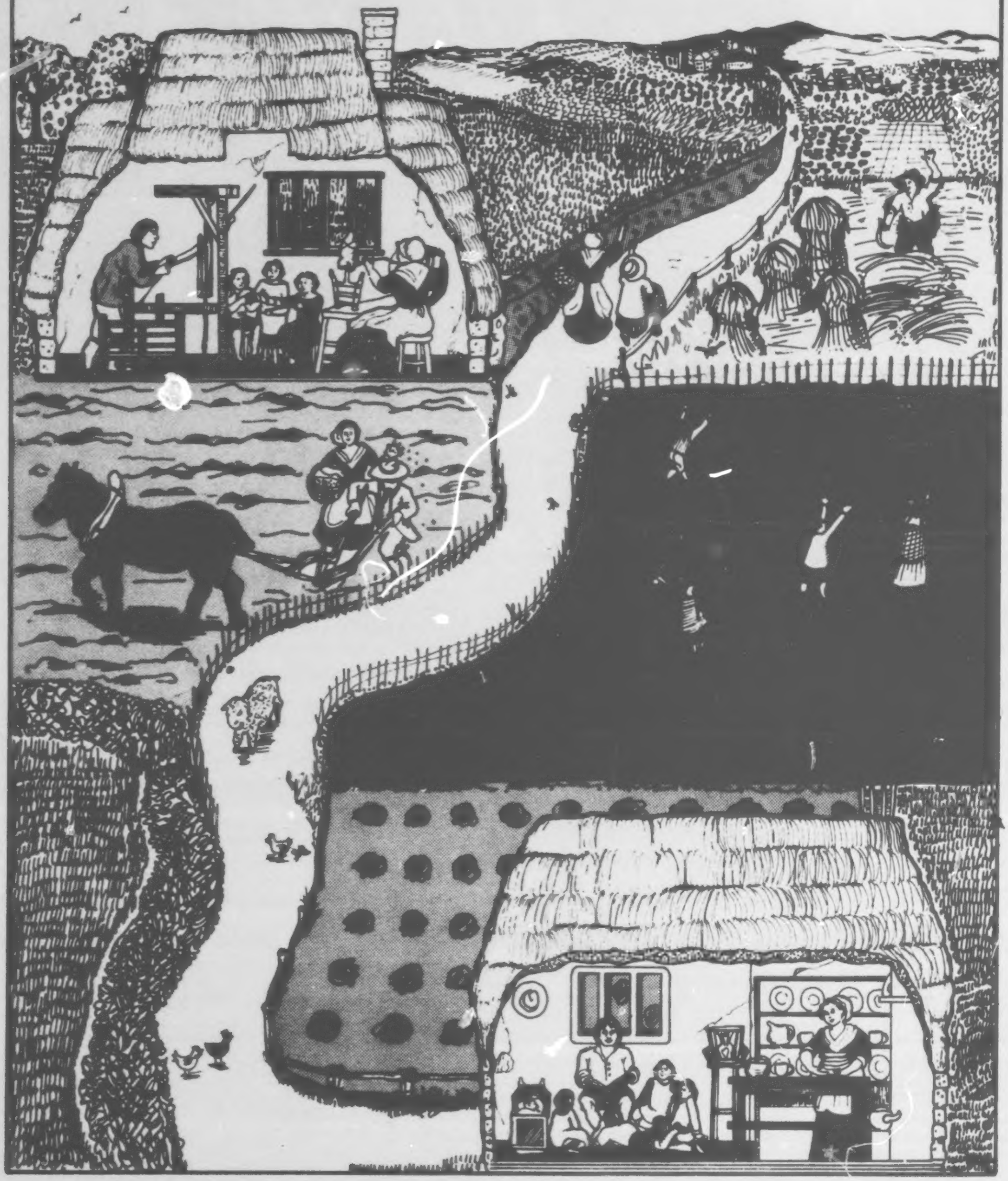
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION?

- It made possible modern society and a high living standard for more people than before.

- It is a good example of how societies change.

- It created many of the features of society we know today, especially those which relate to women. The family, marriage, stereotypes of women, and even the women's liberation movement are directly related to the changes the Industrial Revolution brought about.

Peasant Families in England



WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Before the Industrial Revolution in Europe and Japan, the social-economic system was called "feudalism." Most families lived on the land as agricultural peasants under the domination of the landlord, a religious hierarchy, and a king or emperor. Some people lived in towns and cities, but feudal towns were quite small, functioning mainly as trading centers. The peasant household was usually made up of the family (mother, father, children and grandparents) but sometimes it included servants and hired hands. The servants were mostly very young, unmarried men and women who were learning household skills so that they might have a household of their own one day. They did many necessary chores, including housecleaning and child care, while wives did other work.

In feudal times, women were considered inferior to men. A husband was considered the main provider and protector of the household—a lord of his house. A man could beat his wife as a way of expressing his authority. A wife had almost no legal grounds for divorce. Once she married she was considered part of her husband's household and could not leave without his consent. Girls were often married in their early teens. These marriages were arranged by their parents without the girls' consent.

In spite of this, women before the Industrial Revolution in many ways were more important to their husbands and families than women in more modern times. This is because much of their work in the household was critical to the survival and economic well-being of all its members. Even some tasks we consider "house chores" today were much more important in feudal times. Cooking and sewing, for instance, were the final stage of work on things produced by household members. Today, they are the finishing touches provided on consumer goods bought by wages earned outside the home. In other words, in feudal times, women were primarily producers of goods rather than the consumers of goods they have become.

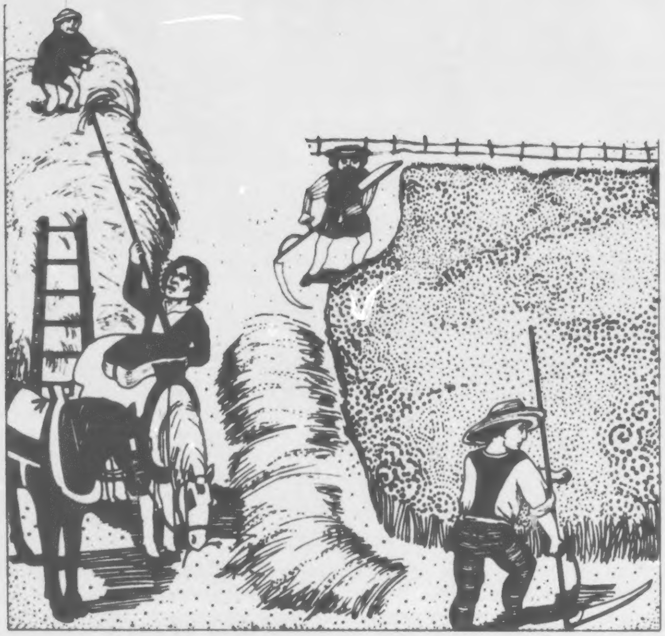
The peasant household lived mostly on the food and other goods and services produced by its members. This method of production is called "domestic economy." In those times there was no idea that the husband went out of the household to work for wages in order to support a wife and children who simply stayed at home. The wife in the domestic economy oversaw and did much of the food and clothing production, selling the surplus for cash income.

Women also worked alongside their husbands in heavy manual labor whenever needed. In recognition of their importance in Japan, peasant housewives were granted a special place on the hearth during the evening called the "kakazu." It was a place of honor.

Children also took part in economically productive work. From the time they were three and four years old, children were assigned tasks according to age. Such tasks ranged from shooing birds and animals away from the crops to winding thread as it was spun to helping out with the many other chores around the household. In Japan, for instance, children tied paper sleeves over ripening peaches to prevent insect and sun damage, or they fished in irrigation canals to supply food for the household diet.

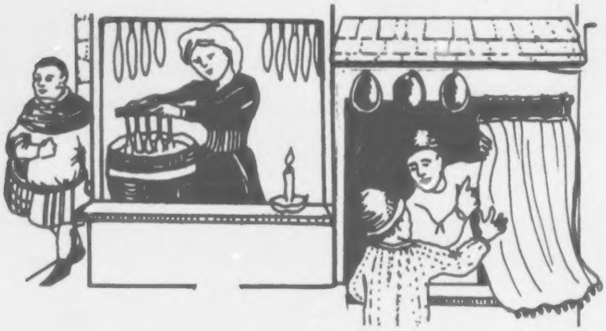
The husband had many duties related to the maintenance and functioning of the household. He was expected to provide protection and labor to the landlord. This meant that much of the time he either worked the landlord's land, so that his wife and servants could work their own plot, or he served in the lord's armed forces in the constant wars and disputes between landlords.

At home, the husband shared in household duties. For instance, since some peasants in England could read and write, he was expected to share in the education and religious training of his children with his wife. He taught young servants how to read and write. Just as his wife was expected to help with manual labor during busy times in the fields, the husband also helped in the household chores at busy times. He also hunted food for the family, and oversaw the sheep and herds of livestock.



In the cities and towns women also played an important role. Smaller crafts and trades were often conducted from shops attached to the home. Since the workshop was in the home, the wife and daughters were expected to help out, so they often knew the craft or trade well. In some places, women members were accepted into the guilds of such various crafts as shoemaking, iron and metal working, and printing. A widow often took over a workshop after her husband's death and was given the same legal status as her husband, thus being able to conduct money matters and carry on the trade.

All this meant that *before the Industrial Revolution, the wife and children were equally as important as the husband in the economic activity of home and society.* Although women and children were considered inferior to men, the wife was not dependent completely on her husband for support. And the man did not look down on household work as inferior to his earning a living outside the home. In many ways, husband and wife had to work together as partners. Cooking, cleaning the house, and child care were not chores only for women. And "making a living" was not the only role for men. As we shall see, this new ideal was brought into being by the Industrial Revolution.



WOMEN BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

STUDENT ACTIVITY

How well did you read?

1. How were *women* important to the family?

2. What is "domestic economy?"

3. Who were the servants? What did they do?

4. In what ways were husband and wife like partners? In what ways is it different today?

5. What was women's status in the crafts and trades in the towns?

6. What is the difference between a producer and a consumer? How would being one or the other influence the status of women?

7. In what ways was women's status different in pre-Industrial times from their status now? In what ways is it the same?

PEASANT FAMILIES IN ENGLAND BEFORE THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Look at the illustration of a typical English country household before the Industrial Revolution.

1. List the different work tasks of each member of the household in pre-industrial times.

   Mother **Father** **Children**

2. List the needs of the family that are met by these activities.
3. List some extra products which might be taken to market to be sold for cash.
4. List some things they might buy at the market for their own use.

THE CHANGING TASKS OF FAMILY MEMBERS

Oral Histories

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Before the Industrial Revolution most families produced or made at home the things they needed— for example, food, clothes, tools, utensils, and toys. In industrialized nations, most families are consumers, which means they buy what they need. Their money for these products is earned from work they do outside of the home.

Thus, one of the most important changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution was to move economically productive work to *outside* the home. As this change took place, there were noticeable changes in the chores and tasks family members did at home.

This assignment is to help you learn about some of these changes which may have happened even in the past two or three generations of American families.

A. Ask your parents and grandparents:

1. When you were my age, what chores were you expected to do at home?

Mother	Grandmother	Father	Grandfather

2. Did you make any extra money outside of the house? How?

Mother	Grandmother	Father	Grandfather

3. When you were my age, did your family produce any of the things they used? What?

   Parents:

   Grandparents:

B. Ask yourself:

1. What chores are *you* expected to do at home?
2. List the ways *you* have earned money *outside* of the home:
3. Does your family *produce* any of the things it uses? What are they?

ORAL INTERVIEW

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Directions

1. Make a date in advance with the person you want to interview. In making this contact be sure to explain the purpose of the interview and the topics you wish to cover.

2. Allow at least 30 minutes for the interview.

3. Begin the interview by explaining again the purpose of the interview and the topics you wish to cover. Be sure the interviewee consents to be interviewed.

4. Ask only one question at a time. Avoid questions which lead to yes-or-no answers. If you do get yes-or-no responses, then ask for an explanation. "Could you explain a little more, please?" Or, "Why did you feel that way?"

5. Take your notes on a separate page.

6. Be patient. Remember, most people have never been interviewed. It is an unusual experience. A person must have time to think about her or his answer. If you act as if you are in a hurry, the other person won't feel that her or his answers are important to you.

THE FIRST STAGE OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION WAS AN AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION:

Facts You Need to Know

- Before the Industrial Revolution, agricultural land use was very inefficient. The majority of people were peasants who lived on the edge of extreme poverty. Lack of agricultural science, inefficient tools, and low yield crops meant the land produced just enough to keep things going, but no surplus.
- The first step in the Industrial Revolution was a complete change in land use so large areas of land could be used with better tools (including mechanization), new kinds of higher yield crops, and more scientific use of fertilizers to produce a commercially profitable surplus of crops.
- With better use of land, such large numbers of peasants were no longer needed. These peasants were forced to become day laborers at the new agricultural units or the new industrial work force in the cities.
- These changes meant far-reaching changes for women.

THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION IN ENGLAND

•Before industrialization, much feudal land was used collectively by serfs, yeomen, and landlords alike. This land was called the *commons*. The peasants, called "yeomen" in England, used the commons to raise their own food, cut wood, grow the raw materials for clothing such as flax for linen, or raise sheep.

• **From the 16th to 19th centuries, many landlords put fences** around this common land and drove the peasants off. They did this by having Parliament pass Enclosure Acts. Since landowners were the only ones who could vote or hold office, Parliament always passed the Enclosure Acts as requested.

•The result was that large numbers of peasants were put off the land and their homes destroyed. Large numbers of unemployed people began roaming England looking for work, sometimes resorting to stealing just to stay alive. Some of these people became day laborers working for a few pennies a day for the landowners. Others became wage laborers working in the new mines and factories.

> *In 1820, the Dutchess of Sutherland enclosed 800,000 acres of land. She put 150,000 people off that land. She put 130,000 sheep to graze on the land. She then rented to each family 2 acres of sub-marginal* land.*

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*sub-marginal means unfit for cultivation.

THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION IN JAPAN

•Before industrialization most peasants in Japan gave the majority of their year's crops to the landlord. They were "tenants" on the landlord's land. Even when weather caused a bad crop, they were forced to give a set amount to the landlord. If they didn't have enough, they had to owe it on the next year's crop. This often left them deep in debt.

•In 1868 anti-feudal groups managed to overthrow the feudal order and establish a new government through a revolution called the Meiji Restoration. The Meiji government acted to abolish feudalism by passing a land reform act. The government gave the old landlords public bonds to pay for land which was then given to peasants.

•Most peasants who received land were too poor to buy seeds, fertilizer, oxen and tools. So, they had to borrow money. Often, they borrowed money from their old landlord, going into debt again. When they could not pay back the loans, many farmers sent their young sons and daughters off the land to look for work.

•This resulted in many young people leaving the land and working in factories and mines. Some of these people left Japan to look for work in other countries, including the United States.

THE RESULTS OF THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

- Land use became more efficient.
- Large numbers of peasants were driven off the land and into the cities looking for work.

CHANGES FOR WOMEN

- Since work moved out of the individual peasant household and into factories and mines, women lost their status as economic partners with their husbands.
- Married women with children whose husbands went to work in the cities were the most discriminated against because it was thought that their husbands should support them. These women had to find work as day laborers or stay with relatives just to find a way to live.
- Other women, especially younger ones, were forced to become prostitutes since they could not make a living any other way.
- The majority of women, however, could find no work and were left as housewives at home with the children. They became dependent on their husbands for everything.
- Most women who went to work found jobs in textile mills, mines and domestic service.
- Working women's wages were always lower than men's, sometimes being only one-third of men's wages for the same work.

THE CREATION OF THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Describe the status of the woman before the Industrial Revolution.

2. What happened to the peasant at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution? How did this happen?

3. How did the Industrial Revolution change the status of the woman?

4. How did the Industrial Revolution affect the peasants as a whole? Where did they go? What did they do?

WORKING-CLASS WOMEN
Facts You Need to Know

•The period of industrialization led to the breakup of the family, with the members going to different places just to try to make a living.

•Soon after the Industrial Revolution began in England and Japan, 75-80% of the population had become working class.

•Wages for working-class men were so low that many working-class women had to find work just to make sure they could eat.

•Women with young children often left them alone or with neighbors or older children. Young babies were often fed alcohol or even opium to keep them quiet until their mothers could return from a 14- to 16-hour work day to feed them. This led to many working-class people being called "dull."

•Girls from the ages of 4 or 5 began to work.

•In both England and Japan, the main jobs for women and girls were in mines, textile factories and domestic service.

•In England more women worked in domestic service than in all other jobs combined.

•Servants suffered some of the worst conditions because of forced isolation from friends, family and other workers, and because of lack of government protection.

•In Japan, the majority of young women worked in textile factories. These women workers made up the majority of all Japanese factory workers until the 1920's.

•Wages and working conditions for women in both countries were terrible. The workday was 14-16 hours, six or even seven days a week. Wages were only a few cents a day.

THERE WAS NO PLACE ELSE TO GO: A GIRL IN THE MINES*

INTRODUCTION

During the early years of the Industrial Revolution in England, women and children worked alongside men in the coal mines. Their jobs, however, were not always the same. For example, men usually dug out the coal and the women and children hauled it to the surface any way they could.

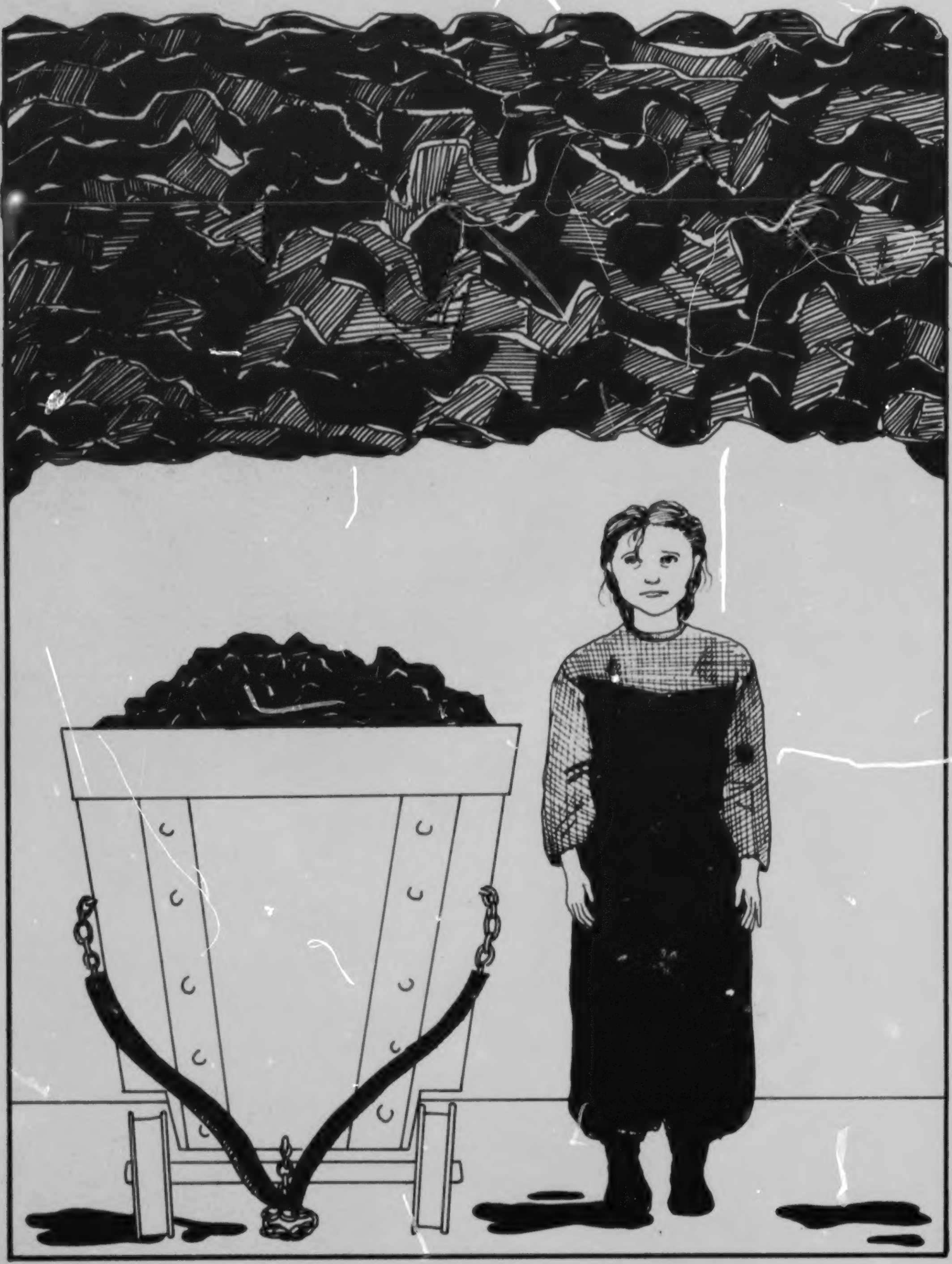
Men and women received different pay. Often men received the paycheck for the whole family so that many women never saw their hard-earned money.

Women who worked in the mines had the extra burden, too, of having to leave their babies with their older children or with a neighbor. When food was scarce, it was often the custom to give the babies rags soaked in gin or laudanam, a form of opium, to chew on. Consequently, babies of the poor were often dull and undernourished.

Work in the mines was very tiring, unhealthy and unsafe. There were no laws before 1842 protecting mineworkers or limiting the age for such work. Children as young as five entered the mines and literally spent their childhood underground.

In this story Ann is lucky. She is 13 years old before she, too, must enter the mines to work. As you read her story, look for the reasons why she had to work and what this work was like.

***Written by In Search of Our Past staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.**



THERE WAS NO PLACE ELSE TO GO: A GIRL IN THE MINES

A CLOSE CALL

"Watch out! Lookee----!" Janet's warning cry pierced the air.

Ann screamed and threw herself to the side of the narrow tunnel as the wagon full of coal came rushing by.

"Watcha doin'. . . . You'll be dead soon enough without hurrin' it up."

The older girl spoke roughly, but her touch was gentle as she shook Ann as if to arouse her from a stupor.

"Remember, it's your first day here in the pit. . . . It'll take awhile before you can hurry the *corve** that fast."

"Go slowly, 'specially when you're going downhill."

Ann shuddered. She didn't speak, but glanced gratefully at the more experienced girl. She knew how close she had come to a terrible accident. Her own sister had been crushed four years earlier by such a coal wagon out of control.

Ann's mother then had sworn that Ann would never go into the mines. But this last hard winter brought cold and sickness to all the mine families and her father had died of pneumonia. Her mother had struggled to keep the family alive by returning herself to the coal pit. She wanted Ann to continue to go to the school. But Ann was now thirteen years old. It was her turn to help bring in some money for food. It would be lovely if her mother and her brothers could find a small farm, but none was to be had. And there were no places left in the nearby factory. The only place left was to go into the mines.

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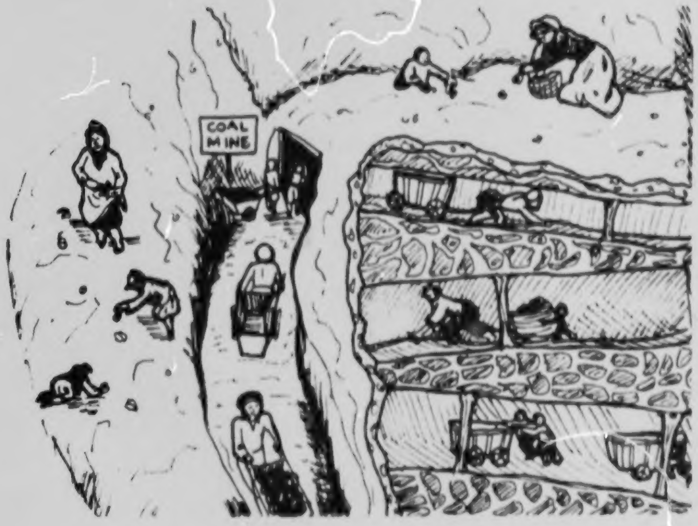
*corve: a coal cart.

This morning it had seemed an adventure. Getting up at 4:30 a.m. and walking in the dark early hours with her mother seemed exciting, part of a growing-up experience. But, as soon as she saw the mine shaft, that deep dark hole into which they must descend in a little cage run by pulleys, she knew this was frightening—not fun.

She held her breath while the cage descended. . . four long minutes it took to reach the bottom. As she got out of the cage, her feet splashed in water, and she sank into mud up over her ankles. She had worn a pair of her father's wool socks inside her boots and his work trousers, but only because her mother had insisted. She had been so glad that it was dark and nobody could see her in such a ridiculous outfit.



JANET'S STORY

After her close call, Ann and her new friend found a higher, drier spot where they could sit and lean their heads back against the cool veins which showed above them.

"What's your name?" asked Ann shyly.

"Janet . . . Janet Duncan. I've been in the mines since I was 5. I began as a trapper. I used to come in before everyone else, to open and shut the little door which lets in the fresh air to each passageway."

"But, when did you go to school?" asked Ann.

"No school for me. I can't write my own name . . . or read a word."

"Wouldn't you like to go to school?"

"No reason, now. I'm 16 and I'm marryin' soon . . . . I'll have me own babies . . . no need to read or write. My man don't read. Wouldn't be proper for wife to be better learn'd than her man."

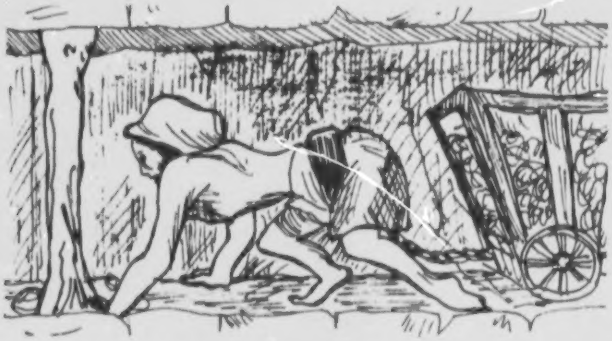
Ann was silent. Her own mother couldn't read, but she had wanted her children to read, especially her daughters. She knew that their chances for betterment would be greater if they could read.

Her older sister, Marie, had been a good student, but she wanted pretty clothes. When she turned thirteen, she went to work in the mines even though her parents were against it. Then she was killed only a few months afterward.

WORK

Ann walked down the narrow passageway—about 2½ feet wide and so low she had to stoop to avoid bumping her head on the rough, uneven ceiling. She was glad she wasn't taller, because her back ached already at 10 o'clock in the morning.

She found her corve where it had slammed into another wagon sitting on the tracks. This time she had to push it uphill. She got in back of it, vowing never to get caught in front again, in case the track suddenly dipped downward and she would find herself once more trying to hold back the heavy load of coal. She was a "hurrier" and her job was to move the coal as fast as possible to a place where it could be removed from the wagon and hauled to the top of the shaft. Now she realized that along with speed, she must use caution. If she were not to die like her sister, Marie, under the wheels of a runaway coal car, she must learn to control this cart.



Shaking from fright, she assumed her position in front of the cart and as soon as the track was clear she began to pull it. She wondered how she would have jumped clear if she had been harnessed like so many of the other women she had seen. They wore harnesses of metal and leather across their backs and breasts, with a metal chain which slipped between their legs and was fastened to the corve. How could they avoid being run over by the cart?

It was getting hot in the pit and some of the women were removing their blouses, or letting the top of their dresses fall down over their hips. Ann was embarrassed. She had never seen women undress before. Even her own mother was very modest and disrobed only in the dark, after the candles were blown out. But as she felt the sweat running down her arms and neck and legs, she wished she also could take off some clothes.

"Dinner time!" Ann jumped at the sound of a voice so close to her ear. It was the same girl who had seen her near-accident. It was almost as if she were watching Ann to be on hand to help her. Ann remembered the little package her mother had tied about her waist that morning. It was one piece of bread, with a piece of pork fat spread on it. She realized she was very hungry.

THE HARNESS

After finishing their simple meal, Janet cupped her hand and brought up some water from a little pool formed by the water trickling down the walls of the cave. She drank it thirstily. Ann watched and then imitated her.

A whistle blew somewhere in the distance.

"Time to get to work." Janet slowly stood up, her body bent to conform to the shape of the curved walls of the passage.

"Now, we must get into the harness," she said, pointing to a pile of chains and metal hanging on hooks close to the tracks.

Ann hung back, frightened. "I'd rather just push with my hands," whispered Ann.

"Inspector 'll be by in a minute, and you'll be fined if you don't get 'em on."

Ann lifted one metal thing down. It was so heavy. She felt as if she were preparing her own coffin, as she separated the leather straps from the chains in order to get her arms and legs locked into it.

There was no time now to ask how she could get free of it in an emergency. What if the cart got going so fast she couldn't stop it . . . like this morning? She remembered her moment of panic and the feel of Janet's sudden push against her shoulder. Nobody could help her once she had this harness on. She would have to be alert every instant to be sure that the wagon did not gain momentum beyond her power to control it.

Janet had her harness on and had started ahead, bending low as the passageway became smaller and smaller. Ann followed, her breath coming in short gasps. She was trying to control her panic. Janet was on her hands and knees, using her body to block the speed of the wagon. Ann was able to stay on her feet, but her head bumped against the ceiling as she moved slowly forward. She knew it wouldn't be long before she, too, would have to get down on all fours.

WORKING-CLASS WOMEN

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. *Where* is the young woman in the story working?

2. *Why* is she working? List the conditions in her family which forced her to work.

3. Describe the working conditions on her job.

4. Compare and contrast this young woman's life with that of a young woman of the same age in pre-industrial times and today.

	Daily Activities	**Family Relationships**	**Future Expectations**
A Young Woman in Pre-Industrial Times			
The Young Woman in the Story			
A Young Woman Today			

I'M NOT COMPLAINING, MUM*

INTRODUCTION

The following imaginary letters were written by a young woman about 16 years old in England in the early 1800's. Her name is Alice. In these letters to her mother and sister Mary, she describes her working conditions as a maid to a middle-class woman named Mrs. Pinchback.

Alice has had to leave home because the Enclosure Acts have forced her family off the land. Her father has moved to another city to work as a weaver in a new workshop. Her mother and younger sister remain in the countryside working as day laborers digging turnips and weeding fields for a man who owns a large amount of land.

In this stage of the English Industrial Revolution, unemployment was very high. Many women did not work because there were no jobs. But for those women who did work, most of them worked as domestic servants. In fact, the majority of English working women were domestic servants throughout the 1800's and in the early 1900's. The English "nanny," or live-in babysitter, and the maid, the cook and the others all became part of the English way of life. For many people it was the only way to try to send money home to their families in the country towns and villages to keep them from starvation.

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*Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.

I'M NOT COMPLAINING, MUM

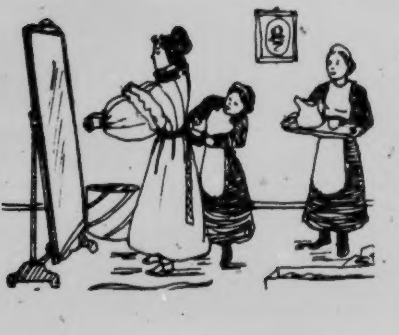
Dear Mum,

I am fine. Moved in this big house last night. Mrs. Pinchback says I might become a lady's maid some day if I do my work and don't give her any trouble.

My job is downstairs maid. I clean all the rooms on the first floor. On Mondays I get up at 4:30 in the morning to help with the washing. And I help the cook in a pinch. But, Mum, it's the dusting that scares me. So many little breakables everywhere . . . things made out of glass and china. I hope I don't break anything. She'll take money out of my wages for breakage.

I'm not complaining, though, Mum. After that lodging house, this is wonderful. I will try to please her so I can send you a little every month.

Love,
Your daughter, Alice



Dear Mum,

It's very late. Rose is already asleep. We share a bed in the attic. She's the upstairs maid. She cleans four bedrooms, besides pressing the clothes for the family. What fancy dresses the ladies wear, Mum. The young ones are not much older than I am. Rose says it's a real chore to keep them looking so nice. The young ladies never pick up their clothes, just let them lie on the floor. I think I'd like to pick up after them. Just touching those beautiful dresses would be lovely.

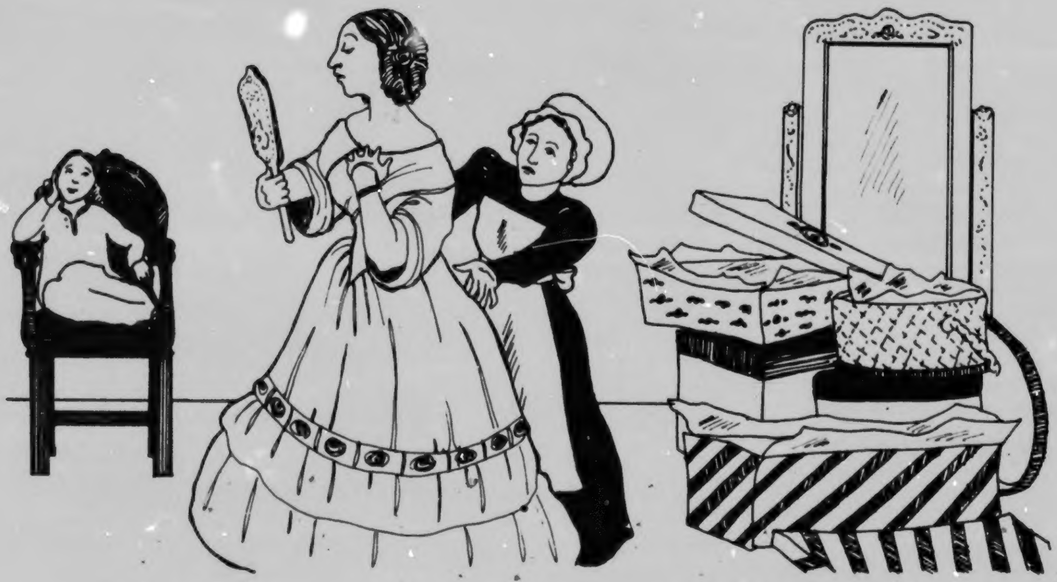
Tell Mary I shall write her soon. I miss her so much. She must be very useful to you now that Papa has gone. Maybe one day she and I could be in service together.

Love,
Alice

Dear Mum,

I am so happy today. Mrs. Pinchback praised me for the way I ironed the lace napkins. Last week I tore the lace on one, and she was very angry. I had to do them over and missed my supper. Imagine, Mama, wiping your face on lace! I never saw such things before. And you should see the china dishes . . . so thin you can see your hand through them! My hands tremble whenever I wash the tea cups. I pray I never drop one of those dishes! Cook watches me carefully. She won't even let the scullery maid touch them. Says she's too clumsy.

Love,
Alice



Dear Mum,

It's raining here. It makes the cleaning harder because everybody gets mud on their boots and it sticks to the carpets. That's my special job, cleaning carpets. I have a big stiff brush and I have to get down on my knees to use it. The upstairs maid told me that in March or April we have to take up every carpet in the house and take them outside and beat them with sticks. At least I'll get out in the sun. I am so tired of dark gloomy London weather. I never see a flower growing. I keep thinking of those little primroses by our door.

Write me Mama, please,
Alice

Dear Mum,

It's late and my candle is almost burned out. But, I have good news. Rose, the upstairs maid, left yesterday because she's getting married. The missus says I can have her place, if I learn to press dresses properly.

I'll get more money to send you, Mama, and now maybe Mary won't have to leave home to find work, at least a little longer. She's only thirteen, and this is very hard work. Some places aren't so nice, either. I've heard about husbands who don't treat servant girls with respect. My little sister shouldn't have to face that.

I hear that wages in the textile mills are better. Some girls make enough to put by for a rainy day. And the hours are regular, not like here. At 6 a.m. I fix fires in the bedrooms, being very careful not to wake the sleeping family. Mrs. P. says she needs her "beauty" sleep. Then, I carry up buckets of water to fill the tubs so they can bathe before breakfast. That is the heaviest load, going up and down stairs with all that water. And I mustn't spill any on the fancy carpets either.

After that, I'm busy making beds, cleaning fireplaces, dusting the rooms and emptying the chamber pots, and doing any mending or pressing the missus requires. After dinner, I must set a fire again in each bedroom and bring up more water for bedtime use. I hardly ever get to bed before 10 o'clock. If there's company, it's much later. We servants have to wait up so that the fires are burning when the family retires. Then I go down to help the servants clean up the drawing room and kitchen before we can go to bed ourselves.

Love,
Alice

Dear Mary,

Mama tells me that you are coming to London soon to work in a textile mill. I am so happy. Soon you'll be making more money than I do. I hope it will be a mill where there are lots of nice girls. You will get Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday free. Maybe you can come to see me than. Since you are my sister, missus might let me off for an hour on Sunday afternoon. She is very particular about who I see. Last Sunday after Church, a young man walked me home. We had been properly introduced by the Minister's wife, but Mrs. Pinchback was very upset. She said it wasn't decent for us to be alone together, even in the daylight. She was so cross to him that I'm sure he'll never come back. He was nice, something like Johnny Miller. You know, the baker's son.

Write to me, Mary, and tell me your address. It is so wonderful to think of having my family near me.

Your loving sister,
Alice

WORKING-CLASS WOMEN

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. *Where* is the young woman in the story working?

2. *Why* is she working? List the conditions in her family which forced her to work.

3. Describe the working conditions on her job.

4. Compare and contrast this young woman's life with that of a young woman of the same age in pre-industrial times and today.

	Daily Activities	Family Relationships	Future Expectations
A Young Woman in Pre-Industrial Times			
The Young Woman in the Story			
A Young Woman Today			

BE BRAVE AND WORK HARD*

INTRODUCTION

The following story is about a 16-year-old woman in Japan named Haruko (which means "girl of spring" in Japanese). The story takes place in the 1880's. Haruko's family is very poor. To try to save her family from losing all their land because of unpaid debts, Haruko goes to work in the city. There she finds conditions in the textile factory much different from what she had hoped.

In Japan during these first stages of the Industrial Revolution, young women such as Haruko made up the majority of the industrial factory work force for many years. These young girls were recruited from poor families in the countryside by unscrupulous labor contractors who made it sound as if all they had to do was work in the city for a few months and all their family's financial problems would be solved. Some of these girls were actually sold into prostitution and then were too ashamed of what had happened to report it to their parents or to try to run away and go home. Others, like Haruko, went to work in factories, but found the work terribly hard.

Some of the attractions offered by the factories and labor contractors were dormitories for the young unmarried women, and meals. In reality, however, these were really only promises. The conditions described in the story were typical of most of these factories.

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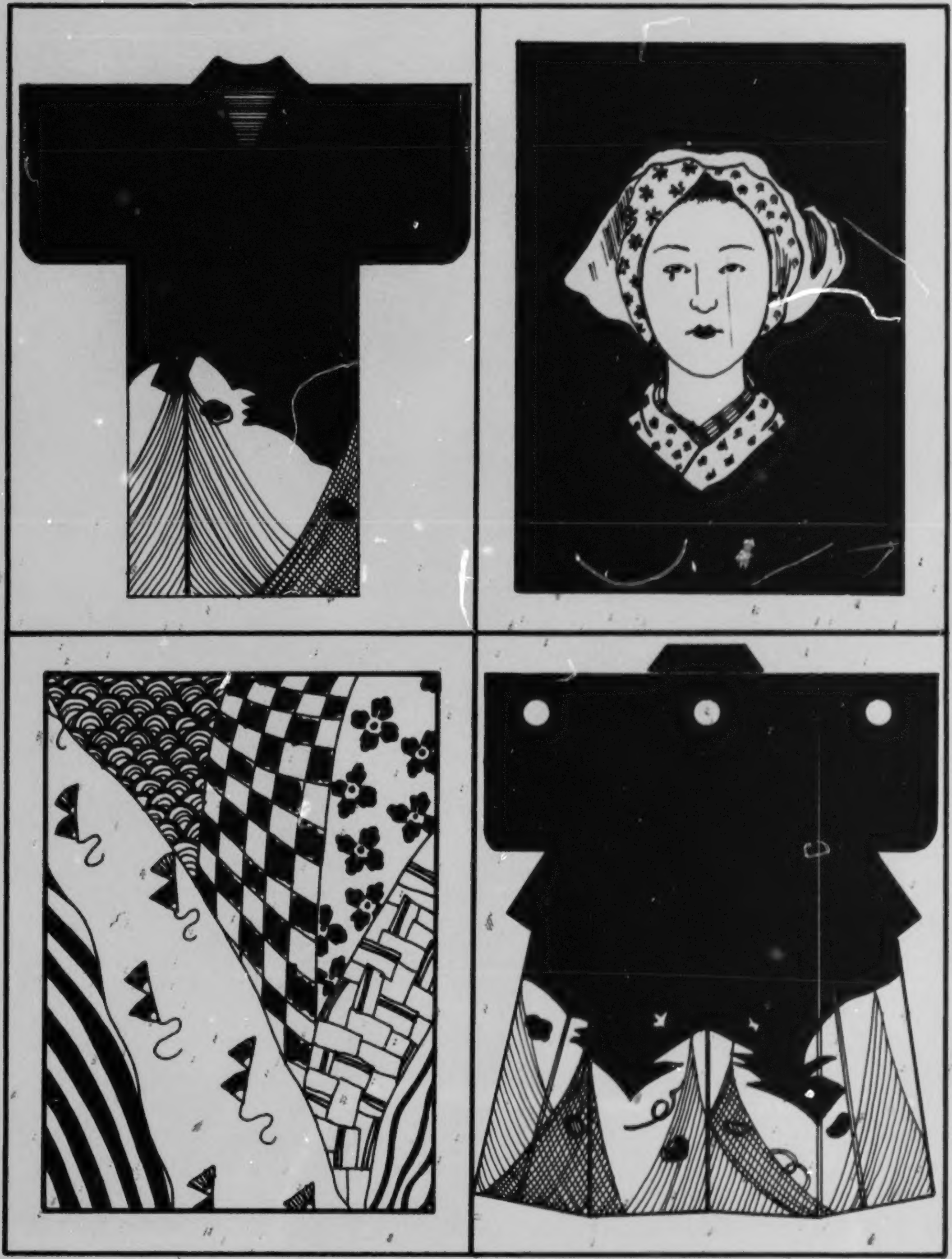
*Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.



BE BRAVE AND WORK HARD

Haruko huddled sleepily under the thin, tattered quilt. It was still inky dark outside but already she could hear the sounds of her mother starting the charcoal stove and washing the rice for breakfast. Haruko wondered if her mother would cook enough for everyone to eat today since this was her last day at home. That thought made her wide awake. No, there wouldn't be much to eat because their remaining rice store was very low. It would still be three months before the next harvest. Could her family hold out?

Haruko started to dress slowly. Twelve years ago they had heard the great news. The new Meiji government was going to give the poor peasants land! How happy they had been. How filled with hope. Before that, almost 80% of every crop was taken by the local landlord and the rice merchants. No matter how hard they worked and how good the harvest, Haruko could never remember having enough to eat. But when they heard they were going to get their own land, everyone thought they would be free from hunger and exploitation. Now they could work for themselves. Haruko had only been four when that happened. But she remembered her father and mother's happiness very well.

But today, all that seemed so long ago. All the hopes of that time were gone. Yes, they had received their parcel of land. But being so poor, they had nothing to start with. They needed an ox and plow, seeds, and fertilizer. And most surprising of all they needed money for rent. Their old landlord's chief aide had come to demand rent for their house.

"Rent?" Haruko's father had asked. "But we have lived here all our lives without paying rent. Even my grandfather was born here. Why do we pay rent now?"

The aide said, "Because of the land reform, you are no longer a peasant of our landlord entitled to a house. You are a free farmer. As such, you must now pay rent to our landlord for this house. If you cannot pay rent, you must leave this house."

"But how can I leave?" Haruko's father said, "I have no place to go."

"If you stay, you must pay rent," said the aide. "Well, I'll leave you to think about it for a few days."

"Thank you," Father said.

Haruko remembered that conversation well. A few days later when the old landlord's representative returned, he had offered to lend Haruko's father the money necessary for seeds, rent and an ox. Overjoyed, he had signed a paper agreeing to pay back the loan in five years. It had not mattered to Father that he was now in debt to his former landlord. Father thought only of his land. With the land he would accomplish everything.

But the money loan proved more powerful than the land, even more powerful than Haruko's father and three brothers, who had labored night and day. Slowly, they had sold pieces of their precious land to pay the debt. Slowly, the debt with interest kept growing. Slowly, it had ruined her father's health until now, a bent, sad old man, he could only do light work.

Haruko thought about it all as she finished dressing and carefully folded her sleeping mat. Once she had dreamed of marrying the son of a farmer and working the land alongside him. Today, after breakfast, she would walk the road into town. From there she would take the new train into Osaka to go to work in a new textile factory. Two neighbor girls had gone several months ago, and already they were sending money back home. Haruko hoped to do the same. With her father disabled, she had signed up with a labor recruiter to work for wages to help pay the family debt.

Haruko was determined to make her contribution to the family. But when the time came to leave she burst into tears. Her mother cried and hugged her close saying, "Be good and be careful. Obey your managers well. We are depending on you." Her old father looked solemn and said, "Be brave and work hard."

Then, her elder brother walked with her to the crossroads, carrying the lunch her mother had prepared. As they parted, her brother said, "I'll do my best to work well here. You do your best in the city, OK?" Haruko nodded and began the long walk to the train station.

Once the train got to Osaka, Haruko already felt less alone. Many of the young girls in the train were going to the city to work. A few were even going to the same factory. Excitedly, they all compared notes. Much to her surprise, Haruko found that her family's situation was very similar to that of many others. All the young women were recruited to work in factories because their families were in debt. The young men stayed to work the land while the young women moved to the cities. They had all been provided with the same things: a place to stay in a factory-owned dormitory, meals, pay sent to parents and time off on Sundays.

Somehow, though, none of them knew exactly what it would be like. So, they were unprepared for the reality. The dormitories were extremely crowded. There was hardly enough room for everyone to lie down—16 women in a small room. The food was barley, the cheapest, poorest food in all Japan. The work day often was from 12 to 16 hours.

Haruko cried every night the first week. Her head hurt from the noise in the factory, where she raced to manage the power looms assigned her. If she was slow, the foreman would shout and threaten her. Hour after hour she had worked as fast as she could. At the end of the shift she could barely eat her bowl of barley before falling asleep. The only thing that kept her going was the thought of her family depending on her. Each morning she awoke wanting to go home, only to realize she could not. Indeed, the other women who had worked there for several months told her the only way home was to become sick. Then the manager would send her home immediately and replace her with another, healthier girl from the countryside.

WORKING-CLASS WOMEN

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. *Where* is the young woman in the story working?

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Daily Activities	Family Relationships	Future Expectations	
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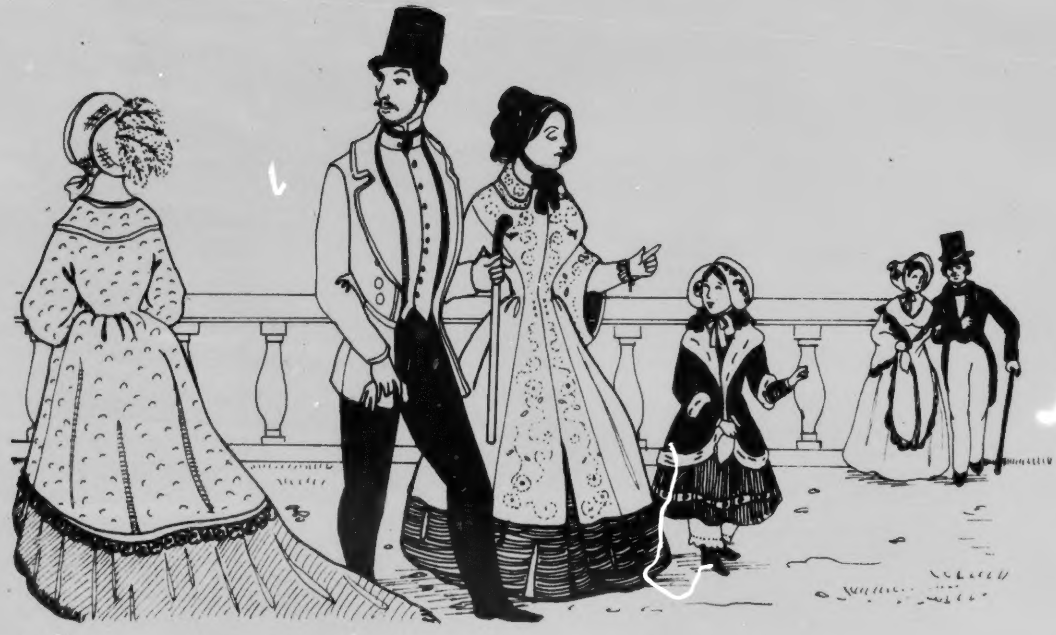
THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN"

THE THREE NEW CLASSES CREATED BY THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The vast majority of people during feudalism lived in the countryside. During the Industrial Revolution these people generally became the new working class in the cities and towns, working in factories and mines and as domestic servants. Besides creating the working class, the Industrial Revolution also created a new class of extremely wealthy bankers, merchants and industrialists. These wealthy people controlled the economic life of the entire country and had so much wealth they lived even better than the kings and lords of feudalism. In England, these wealthy families often had 25 or more servants at each of several homes



they owned all over the country. In Japan, the wealthy became sponsors of artisans and craftspeople, buying many beautiful pieces of art to decorate their homes.

The Industrial Revolution also created a new middle class who were neither as rich as the bankers and industrialists nor as poor as the working class. Many of them were craftspeople and small traders from feudal times, such as carpenters and greengrocers, whose work was not drawn into the new factories. Other members of the middle class came into being because of the kinds of jobs brought about by the Industrial Revolution, such as clerks, bank managers and professionals.

The middle class had two sides to it. On the one hand, the middle class had enough money and had the dream that it could be just like the wealthy. One the other hand, they not only did not have the same kind of wealth as the rich, they sometimes came very near to being forced into the working class because the new technologies and factories wiped out some of the small shops and handcrafts. It was from this desire to imitate upper-class lifestyles, and the need to show they were not members of the working class, that the image of the "ideal woman" emerged.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS WOMAN

In feudal times, many women and girls had participated in economically productive work as part of the crafts and trades. But as the Industrial Revolution began, many of the crafts and trades began to disappear. A blacksmith, for instance, could not make nails by hand nearly as fast or as well as a machine. So a machine replaced the work he had once done, and his job. Fearful of being displaced, and determined to protect their jobs, the guilds (the organizations which represented the different crafts and trades) began to exclude women in order to keep up their business and their income. The men members assumed that if the men's income could be kept high enough, they could then stay in business even with the competition from the new factories. For example, if a blacksmiths' or metalworkers' guild had 100 members including 20 women, and an iron foundry set up shop in the same town, the competition from the foundry would reduce the work available to all guild members. This would mean a loss of income. If the 20 women members were eliminated, the remaining 80 men members would have more work and therefore more income.

In any case, middle-class women in the cities during the transition to the Industrial Revolution were purposefully excluded from productive work. This was the beginning of the assumption that men are supposed to be the breadwinner and that women should stay home. This was also the beginning of the idea that women should stay out of the labor force because their "competition" would bring down wages and cause a hardship for men.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN"

As the pace of economic life increased during the Industrial Revolution, the middle class became more and more affluent. This affluence, enough to allow a middle-class family to live on one income, plus the presence of cheaper ready-made goods, made it possible for the middle class to live a lifestyle similar to that of the wealthy. Budgets were watched carefully, and although the middle-class wife could not afford 25 servants, she could afford two or three servants, thereby relieving her of many household burdens and lending to her life an image of leisure.

The image of the "ideal woman" developed gradually. According to the image, the middle-class "ideal woman" was married and had children. She did not work. In fact, she was not supposed to work. Work was considered to be coarse and unfeminine. Work was a man's world.

The woman's world was the supposedly gentler realm of home and children. She was to be as much alike as possible to women of the wealthy class—managing servants, caring for children and cultivating the finer arts such as embroidery and music. Because she was expected not to work outside the home, the middle-class woman had to depend on her husband for everything, incuding her own survival. Her existence was defined through her husband and children—as they succeeded and prospered, so did she. If she failed to be a good helper to her husband, or if her children failed to conform to the expectations of reproducing the ideal middle-class life, the middle-class woman herself was a failure. Thus, her life became preoccupied with making a good marriage, helping her husband succeed in his career and helping her children succeed in their educaton. As the Industrial Revolution progressed, the middle-class woman's dependence on her husband and her role as wife and mother developed into a stereotyped notion of what *all women* ought to be.

This is the way one writer summed up the "ideal woman":

"The ideal marriageable girl should expect to have the following: softness and weakness, delicacy and modesty, a small waist and curving shoulders, and an endearing ignorance of everything that went on beyond household and social life. Husbands did not require brains in their wives. They demanded charm, a high sense of domestic duty, admiration for and submission to themselves, and the usual accomplishments necessary for entertaining friends."[1]

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[1] *The Early Victorian Woman,* Janet Dunbar, George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., London, 1953, p. 20.

The idea that women should not work also became an important part of the man's ideal. If his wife did not have to work, it showed that he was a good and hard-working husband able to support his wife properly. The middle-class wife at home meant that the middle-class man was a cut above the working-class man whose wife had to work because the working-class man's income was not enough to support the family.

Basically, the middle-class "ideal woman" can be summarized as follows:

- A woman did not work for money but was economically dependent on her husband.
- This meant that young middle-class women had to cultivate all the charms and talents meant to attract a good husband and then help him succeed in his career.
- The husband was supposed to be strong and responsible to provide for and protect his wife and family.
- At least one or more servants were needed to do most of the housework and child care so that the wife could have leisure time to cultivate artistic and social talents.
- Fashions in hair, clothes and home furnishings were copied from the rich and emphasized style and leisure.
- Women were supposed to be protected from the world outside the home and were to be kept pure and innocent in thought and deed.

THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL WOMAN"

STUDENT ACTIVITY

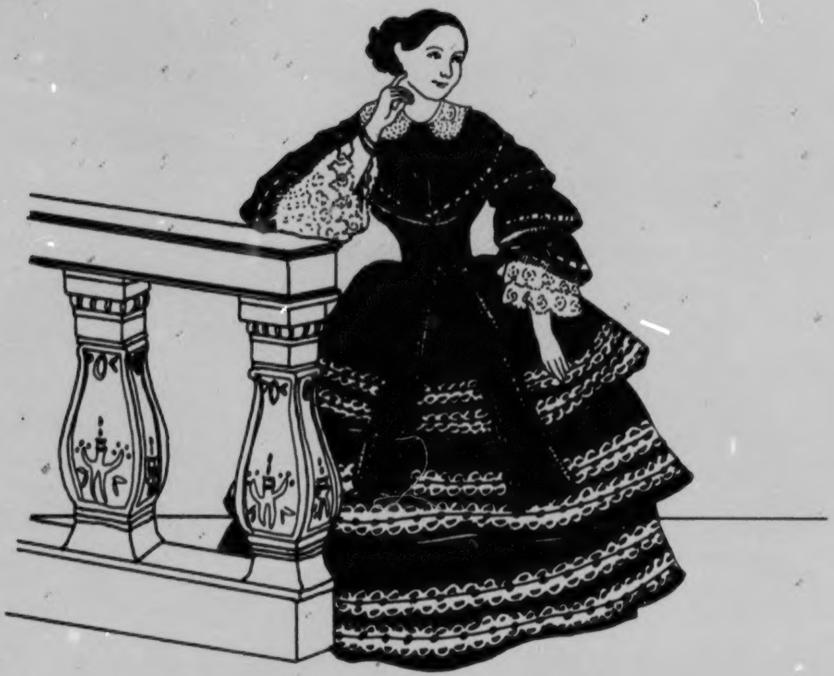
1. What was the middle class? How was it different from the upper and working classes?

2. How did the middle class change from the feudal middle class during the Industrial Revolution?

3. Describe the change in status of women of the middle class from feudalism to the Industrial Revolution. Give an example of this change.

4. What did this change mean in terms of an "ideal woman?"

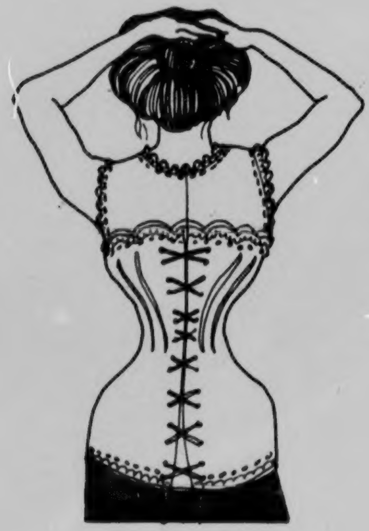
WHAT DID THE "IDEAL WOMAN" WEAR . . . AND WHY?



In the drive to copy the wealthy and to reflect their own new ideas of womanhood, fashion became a new industry with a large market among the middle class. Variations of styles of dress among the women of wealth was not new. In feudal times, however, only women of the landlord class or the royal court could afford the fashionable clothes of the day. But the Industrial Revolution made ready-made clothes and cloth available and affordable to many of the middle classes for the first time. The middle-class woman had enough money to purchase the latest of every fad. Her position as enhancer of her husband's career also made it important for her to be well dressed whenever she went out in public.

Women's clothing tended to emphasize the leisure aspect of the middle-class woman's life. There were "at home" dresses to entertain callers, afternoon clothes to go out shopping or to call on other people, dinner clothes for dining fashionably with one's husband, and of course evening and party clothes for going out at night or presiding over dinner parties at home.

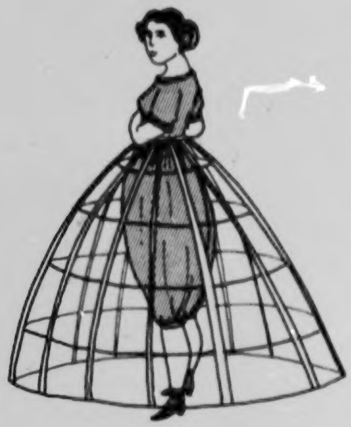
In Japan, women's fashions also showed that middle- and upper-class women did not work. The Japanese woman's dress, called a kimono, had extremely long sleeves that gradually grew to such lengths during the Industrial Revolution that they almost touched the ground. The obi, or wide sash wrapped around the kimono, got wider and stiffer during the 19th century so that a



woman could hardly bend over, resembling in many ways the English corset. Commentators of that time said that these fashions reminded them of the long sleeves the court scholars used to wear that covered their hands to show they did not have to do manual labor.

In England, women's clothes emphasized the new middle-class ideal for women by eliminating functional and practical features. Skirts were so long men made jokes about being able to eliminate sweeping floors and streets because the skirts did that. Fashions became so extreme that women tried to completely reshape their bodies to emphasize their "weak and delicate nature." Here are two examples of the English fashion:

> Corsets were made of stiff material such as whalebone or metal strips, wrapped around the woman's body and pulled as tight as possible to cinch in the waist. It was held in place by strings that looked like shoelaces. Often, a servant would



put her foot in the wearer's back to get enough leverage to pull the laces tight. The ideal waistline was seventeen inches. The corset so constricted the abdomen that a woman was subject to fainting spells and shortness of breath. The corset also interfered with the ability to eat and digest food properly.

Crinolines were a series of hoops held together with canvas or horsehair strips to make the skirt or dress stand far out from the wearer's legs. The purpose was to make the waist look even smaller.

WHAT DID THE "IDEAL WOMAN" WEAR AND WHY?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Could working-class women in the mines, factories, or domestic service wear such clothes? Why or why not?
2. How was the health of women affected by wearing such clothes? What would be the effect on personality and temperament?
3. Why do you think women insisted on wearing such clothes?
4. Can you think of modern clothing for women which has similar effects?
5. What changes in fashion have happened as women's roles have changed from the 19th century "ideal of womanhood"?

THE REALITY OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS WOMAN

The duality of the middle class, between the heaven of the wealthy and the hell of the working-class slum, had its less than ideal side for the woman. Her dependence on her husband made her a helpless victim of injustice and sometimes violence at his hands. Divorce was almost impossible for women in Japan and England. In addition, the woman's money and property became her husband's upon marriage and she had no rights over them, even if she earned money herself.

The middle-class wife was expected to bear her husband's children. Especially expected were sons. This expectation was rooted in the need, which we saw also during feudal times, to insure that a man's property was inherited by his true heirs and offspring. The son, especially the eldest, was needed to inherit the property of the father. This can still be seen today in the desire of some men to pass on their trade or business to their sons. A son was necessary, as well, to carry on the family name. The middle-class woman, as the bearer of her husband's children, was clearly a vehicle for the transmission of his property. She had no right to her own children.

The middle-class woman was excluded completely from public life—life outside the home—except for social occasions. She had no contact with the economic and political decision making of the country. Although it seemed to be a "dream world" of having no responsibilities and cares, the exclusion from the real world outside the home stunted the middle-class woman's personality. She lived a very isolated and lonely existence—on her pedestal!

Weakness in a woman not only was a virtue, but was supposed to be an important part of her character. Women came to be thought of not only as weak physically, fainting at the sight of a mouse or the least emotional distress, but as weak in character as well, unable to think rationally or make decisions.

For many women, the material comforts of the ideal life were not enough to compensate for a life of dependency and lack of meaning outside of husband and children. Some women became chronically depressed and others displayed a variety of physical illnesses as they shouldered the burden of bridging the gap between the empty and sad reality of their lives and the idolization of their position.

JUST BETWEEN US MEN*

INTRODUCTION

The following conversation takes place in a living room of a house in a big city in Japan in the 1910's.

The conversation takes place between three characters: Mr. Fukuzawa, a wealthy banker; Mr. Sato, a long-time customer of Fukuzawa's bank, and Mr. Ito, a young merchant who has just recently become a customer at Fukuzawa's bank. Ito and Sato are thinking of going into business together and financing their venture with a substantial loan from Fukuzawa's bank.

The three men have just finished dinner at Mr. Sato's house and are waiting for Mrs. Sato to begin the entertainment of the evening by playing the *koto*, a Japanese harp.

***Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography of this unit.**

JUST BETWEEN US MEN

Ito: Mr. Sato, thank you very much for the dinner. I am very grateful for your kindness and hospitality.

Sato: Well, it's really nothing. My wife really is not a good cook. She cooks only simple country food, not really fit for a fine dinner in the city. She is also only a fair koto player. Although she studied for many years, I think she is not really talented. Nevertheless, I hope you will honor us by staying to listen.

Ito: Well, actually I thought when she served us dinner she was very well-bred and polite. Just between us men, I think she is a real credit to you and your family.

Fukuzawa: Mr. Ito, don't you have some good news for us tonight?

Ito: Ah, er, well . . .

Fukuzawa: Now Mr. Ito. Please speak up. Is it something special?

Ito: (blushing) Yes, actually, my wife had a baby two days ago.

Sato: What good news! Your first child?

Ito: Yes, it was a boy.

Sato: A first-born son! My, how fortunate you are. You must have a fine wife to give you a son right away. We only have two daughters here. Daughters, after all, are only here long enough to eat rice before they go as brides to someone else's house.

Ito: Well, yes. A son is an accomplishment isn't it? (laughing) But daughters are very sweet.

Sato: That is easy for you to say who now has a son. I want to have a son to carry on my business.

Fukuzawa: Mr. Ito, congratulations! We must have a toast. (raises wine cup) To the health of your son. May you have many more. (drinks) Now tell us about your wife. Is she in good health?

Ito: Yes, she is doing well. The midwife says she is strong enough to have many more children.

Sato: That's very good. A strong wife who gave you a son the first time. You are very lucky.

Ito: Yes, thank you. I was thinking of inviting the two of you to my home soon. My wife is a samisen* player. She is not very talented, but perhaps you might enjoy such an entertainment.

Fukuzawa: Ah, having a good wife who gives you sons and is artistic as well makes you very fortunate. I accept your invitation. Young man, it is a pleasure to do business with you!

***samisen—a three stringed Japanese instrument somewhat like a guitar.**

THE MIDDLE CLASS LOOKS DOWN ON THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

Hovering between wealth and the fear of falling into the working class, the middle class developed an ambiguous attitude toward the working-class woman. On the one hand, the working-class girl servant became indispensable to the middle-class home, doing the heavy chores and home maintenance so that the mistress of the house could enjoy the finer things of life, such as artistic and musical pursuits and afternoon teas.

On the other hand, the middle-class woman looked down on the working-class woman because she worked and because she did not attend to the role of wife and mother with the same constant devotion that she, the middle-class wife, thought necessary.

In industrial England, the word "spinster" originally described women who made a living spinning thread. It later came to mean a contemptible woman who worked in the textile mills and did not marry. The spinster was always the outcast of the family—always called on to help, but never included in the family functions.

In Japan, the term *shokugyo fujin*, or "occupation woman," came to mean the same thing. It was a slightly contemptible term used to describe the working woman. She was considered unfeminine and an unsuitable match for marriage to a prosperous middle-class son.

This tendency to look down on the working class while at the same time depending on the working class for its lifestyle can be seen in the areas of the middle-class woman's relationship to her servants, and in the middle-class attitude toward marriage.

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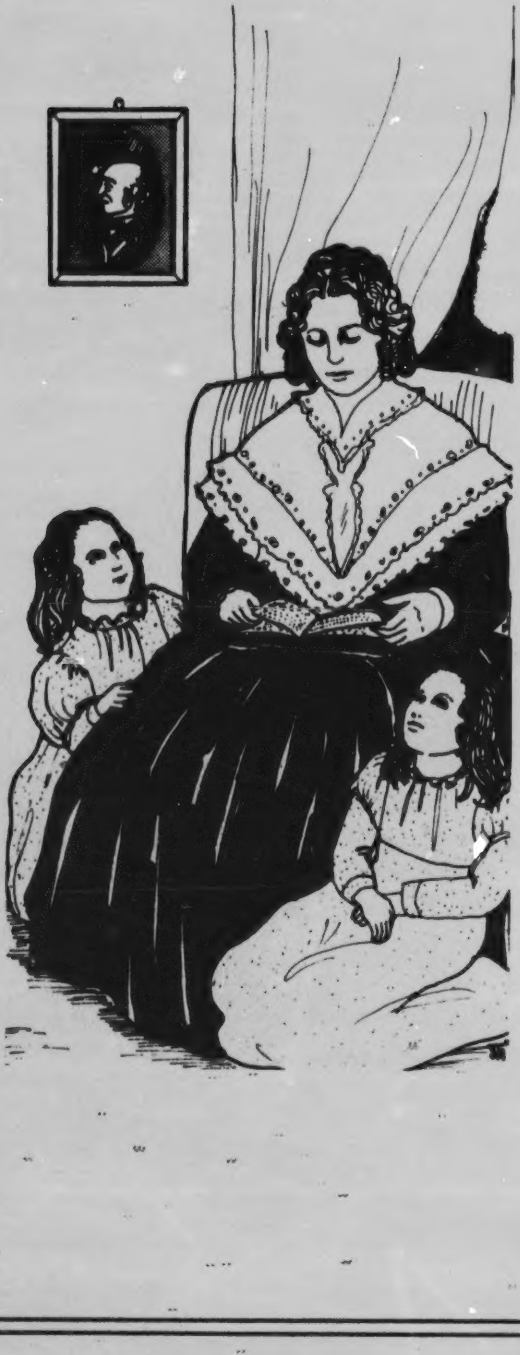
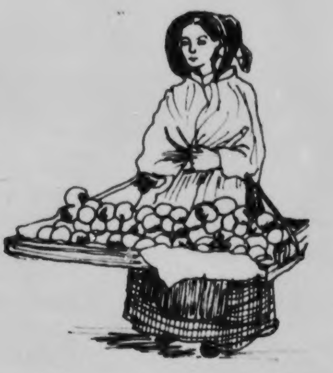
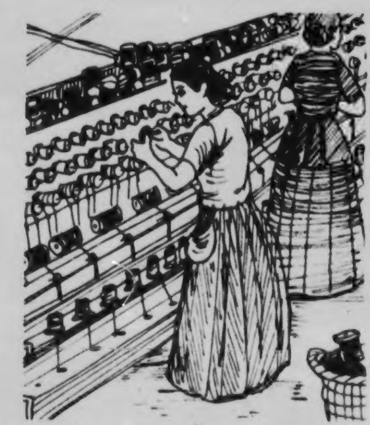
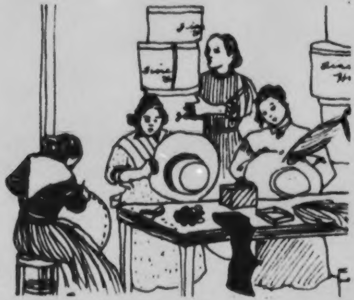
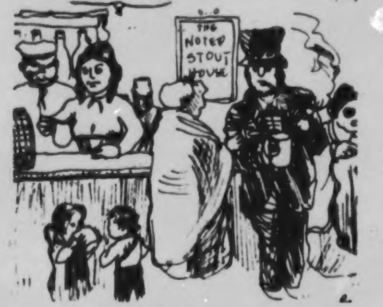









THE NOTED STOUT HOUSE

THE DOMESTIC SERVANT

The domestic servant was an absolute necessity for the middle-class woman to live her middle class life. Servants handled all the heavy and distasteful aspects of housework and child care. In an era when there was little or no indoor plumbing, maids carried wash water into the house and heated it and carried it up and down the stairs for all washing and cooking and bathing. They also carried away the chamber pots which served as toilets. They also had to keep the house clean and the children diapered and cared for in an era when there were no washing machines, no vacuum cleaners, no sewing machines, and no other appliances.

Wages were so low that entering domestic service for most girls served the purpose of insuring lodgings and food rather than providing an income to have a decent livelihood. Some mistresses expected that their girl servants would never marry but instead devote themselves to a lifetime of service to the family for whom they worked.

MARRIAGE

Marriage was the indispensable method to preserve the middle-class status and enhance the family's upward mobility. It was absolutely necessary that a young girl make a good catch and marry someone of the proper status and background. In turn, it was absolutely necessary that she produce children, and especially sons to carry on the family business or trade.

For these reasons, the middle-class family looked after their daughters with extreme care and carefully screened any prospective brides for their sons. The entire future of the family and its business, and therefore its class status, depended on a correct and careful choice.

THE MIDDLE CLASS LOOKS DOWN ON THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Why was the middle-class woman scornful of the working class woman?

2. In what ways did the work of the domestic servant make the middle-class woman's lifestyle possible?

3. Can you speculate why the domestic servant was paid so little for her work?

4. Do you see any similarities in the way society viewed the middle-class woman and her domestic servant? What is the difference in the way society viewed them?

5. Why was a "good marriage" so important for a middle-class girl? Imagine a "bad marriage" and what it might be like.

THE MIDDLE CLASS LOOKS DOWN ON THE WORKING-CLASS WOMAN

Illustration of the "Ideal Woman" and the Working-Class Reality

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Carefully look at the woman in the center of the drawing on page 65. What is she doing?

2. Carefully look at the women in the drawings around her. What are these women doing?

3. Why do you think there is such a contrast between the woman in the center and the rest of the women?

4. To what class would the woman in the center belong? To what class do the women in the surrounding drawings belong? Why is this important to understanding the whole drawing?

MY DEAREST BROTHER ALBERT*

INTRODUCTION

You have already read the letters "I'm Not Complaining, Mum," written by young Alice, who was a maid in Mrs. Pinchback's house. The following letter, "My Dearest Brother Albert," was written by Mrs. Pinchback herself, describing many of the same incidents found in Alice's letters, but from Mrs. Pinchback's point of view. Notice the differences!

My Dearest Brother Albert,

Thank you for your letter of the 10th. We here are all in good health. I would be content if it were not for the problems with the servants. Daily, I have many interesting conversations with afternoon callers. And my dear friend, Charlotte, and I have taken up pottery painting. I will send you a good sample soon.

But my dear brother, what is to be done with servants these days? The upstairs maid has run off to be married with hardly two weeks' notice. I suspect it was less for love than to spite me after I refused to excuse her from clearing up after supper. She claimed she was tired. Tired!! Can you imagine? What was I to do? If she did not clean up after supper, I would have no chance for pleasant conversation with my husband. And what are servants for, anyway?

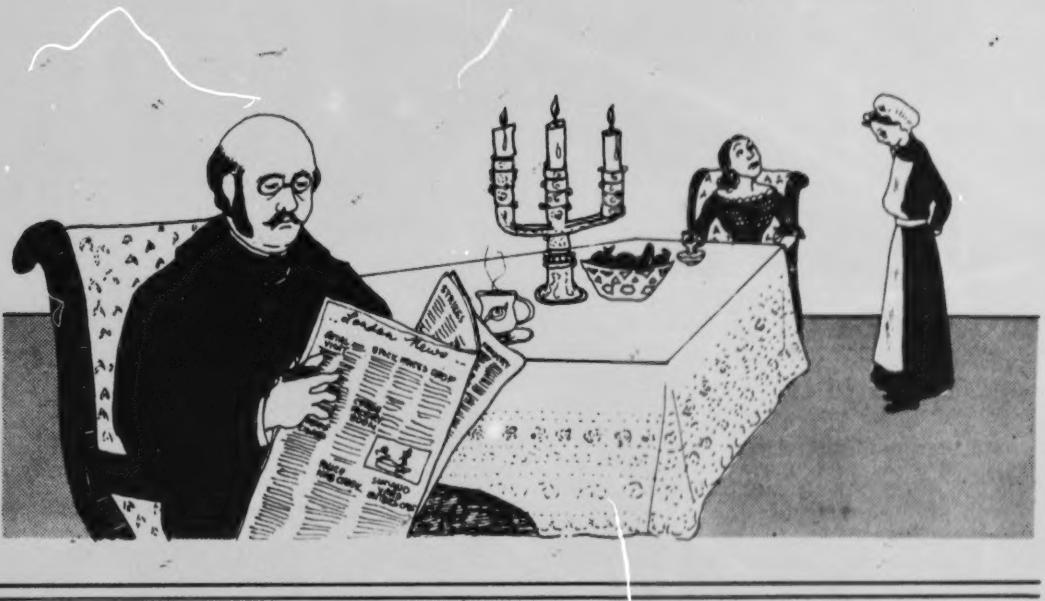
Be that as it may, she is gone. I think I shall bring the downstairs maid upstairs to wait on me. Yet it may be costly. I doubt she will accept less than 2 shillings a week. What has come over these people? What happened to the days when one could find serving people at less than a shilling a week and expect a lifetime of honest service and a full day's work?

***Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography of this unit.**

I wonder if the new girl will give me trouble. Not long ago she tore a lace napkin, one of the set Mother gave me as a special gift. And last Sunday she dared to come home escorted by a young man. I gave both of them a stern lecture. The girl was out in the full daylight with him. She even dressed to look like a young woman from a respectable class! Don't servants these days know their place? Ah! Remember our dear Esther? She always dressed plainly and was so polite, even though we were only children. Oh, to find a jewel of a maid like her again.

Well, I am afraid I bore you with these details. I suspect you must be having your woes with servants, too. It seems a common problem to all respectable classes these days. I will close now. May God keep you.

Your sister,
Emily



MY DEAREST BROTHER ALBERT

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. What does Mrs. Pinchback expect from her servants?

2. What does this letter tell you about the mistress-servant relationship?

3. How does Mrs. Pinchback explain why the previous upstairs maid left her? How does Mrs. Pinchback explain Alice's walk home from church with the young man? How does Mrs. Pinchback explain Alice's pay?

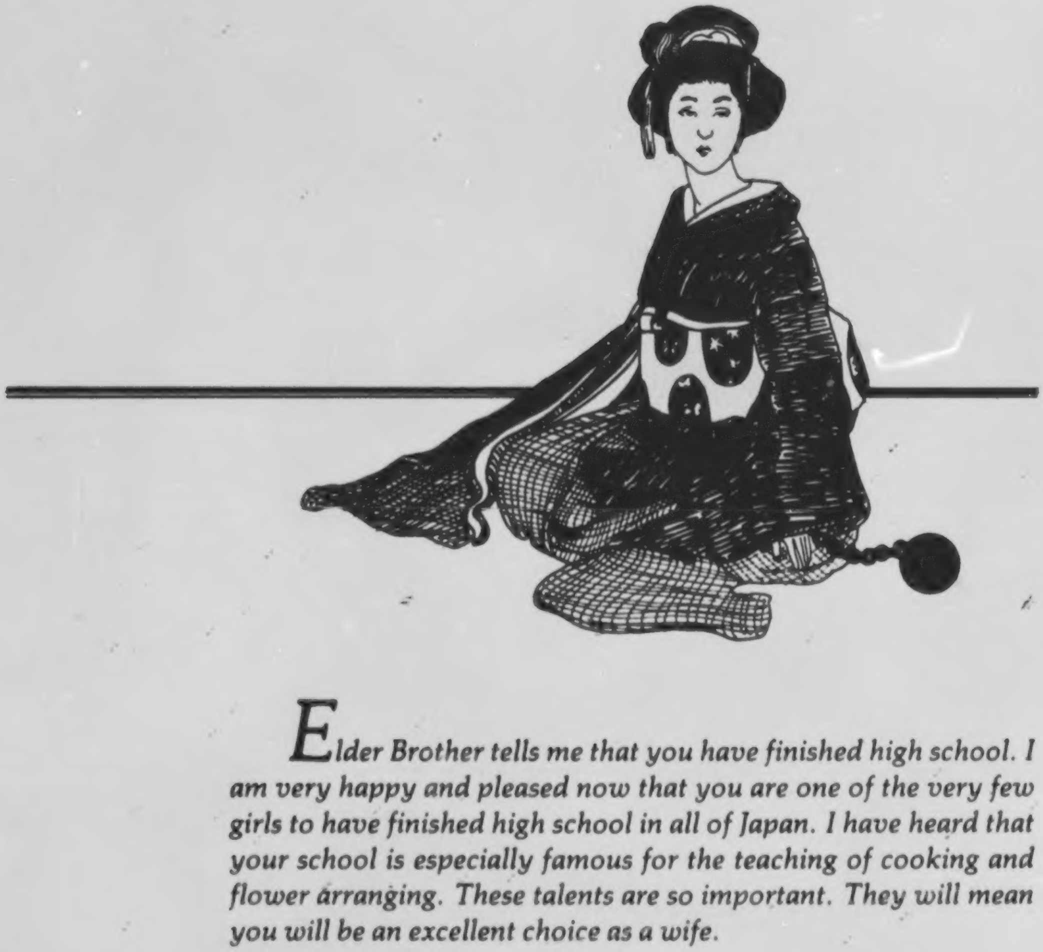
4. Compare these explanations with those of Alice.

5. What kind of lifestyle do the servants make possible for Mrs. Pinchback? Could such a lifestyle be possible without servants?

6. What kind of lifestyle is possible for the servants?

7. Do you think you would like to live like Mrs. Pinchback? Why or why not?

PREPARE TO ACCEPT WOMAN'S DESTINY*



Elder Brother tells me that you have finished high school. I am very happy and pleased now that you are one of the very few girls to have finished high school in all of Japan. I have heard that your school is especially famous for the teaching of cooking and flower arranging. These talents are so important. They will mean you will be an excellent choice as a wife.

***Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts of this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.**

I hope you have given much thought to becoming a proper wife. It is woman's destiny to marry and devote her life to husband and family. Everything we women do should prepare us to accept this destiny. Without marriage we have no future, no fulfillment in life. This is why Elder Brother, out of affection for you, asked me to write to you.

Ever since our dear parents passed away several years ago, Elder Brother has done his best to carry on the carpentry shop he worked in with Father. Elder Brother has become the head of our family and looks out for us. Very soon, he will begin to be approached by marriage go-betweens about arranging a marriage for you to a fine young man. You know Elder Brother will find a good match for you—a man with the right background and from a respected family. That is why you should do nothing to make yourself unattractive.

I have heard that labor recruiters have approached some of your friends from high school about becoming government secretaries and clerks. I hope you will refuse their offers. If you become one of those shokugyo fuhin *[occupation women], no man from a respectable family will want to marry you. After all, as an occupation woman you must appear in public and make manly and harsh decisions. Such a situation cannot but help form your character incorrectly. You will become coarse and unfeminine. Please do not become an occupation woman. I request this of you very urgently.*

I hope that other than this question, there is nothing else to trouble your mind in any way. We women must prepare to accept woman's destiny.

I hope you remain in good health.

Your sister,
Emiko

PREPARE TO ACCEPT WOMAN'S DESTINY

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. To what class do you think Emiko, her sister and Elder Brother belong?

2. What seems to be Emiko's attitude toward working women? Why?

3. Why does she try to keep her sister from going to work?

4. What does Emiko think is "woman's destiny"? Do you agree? Why or why not?

5. Write an imaginary letter to someone today about things which might make a woman unsuitable for marriage.

MODERN-DAY EXPECTATIONS OF WOMEN: IS THE MIDDLE-CLASS "IDEAL" STILL WITH US?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Fill out the following questionnaire based on what you think most women are expected to do. Circle the words that complete the sentence.

1. Women (should / should not) work and plan a lifetime career like men.
2. Women (should / should not) work after marriage.
3. Women (should / should not) work while raising children.
4. Women (should / should not) do most of the housework and child care if they work outside the home.
5. Women (are / are not) more emotional than rational.
6. Women (are / are not) physically weak and unathletic.
7. Women (should / should not) spend most of their time trying to get married to a man with a career.
8. Women (are / are not) better at literature and the arts than men.
9. Woman (are / are not) better at science and math than men.
10. Women (are / are not) "tomboys" if they like athletics.
11. Women (are / are not) taking jobs from men if they go to work in fields such as business management, sciences, medicine, or sports writing.

WHERE DID OUR EXPECTATIONS COME FROM?

Today's expectations of both men and women are often modern dress-ups of middle-class ideals generated during the Industrial Revolution. The desire to look like a movie star who is young and sexy is a media adaptation of the 19th century "ideal middle-class woman," who tried to be as appealing as possible to the right man so she could be supported by him as a wife in the proper middle-class style.

In modern life, however, more and more women are going outside the house to work. In 1978, for the first time in American history except for World War II, the majority of women were in the work force. The middle class "ideal" is still with us though, since these women are still expected to take care of the house and children as if they were not working. The "double burden" of housework and wage work falls solidly on the shoulders of the millions of working women in this country. This is in spite of the fact that the majority of women who work do so out of economic necessity. Often the husband's wages are not enough to support the family. Or they are the head of the family due to divorce or widowhood. Many women, just like men, find great fulfillment in working outside the home.

Government attitude also seems to be conditioned by the old middle-class notion that women should not work. Funds appropriated for child care and after-school programs are among the first to be cut back during times of economic trouble. And women are not considered part of unemployment statistics if they have given up trying to find a job and return home to housework and child care.

There are many other ways the middle-class "ideal" still remains with us. Women, supposedly, are not rational and cannot do science, math, politics, or anything else which requires rational thought. The 19th century middle-class woman was not supposed to know anything about worldly matters, confining herself to literature and the arts—a stereotype which remains with us today.

Women, it is thought, are not athletic. Confined in corsets and wearing long skirts and/or sleeves, many middle-class women in the Industrial Age seldom went out-of-doors, much less took part in strenuous exercise or athletics.

As a result of these and other historically derived ideas about women, today we still see such things as men's sports having priority over women's sports, few women in science and math, even fewer women in politics, and working women feeling guilty because their homes are not as clean as those of their neighbors who do not work.

The final touch to making women a prisoner of these expectations was when these weaknesses came to be thought of as "natural." Women are supposed to be weak because it is their nature to be weak—or so ran the logic of the day. Women came to be "naturally" weak, passive, unathletic, irrational and emotional. Any woman who did not conform was "unnatural." She was considered unfeminine, unwomanly or, even worse, "mannish." Women who tried to enter politics, be athletic or get into the sciences were accused of trying to be like a man. This is where words such as "tomboy" come from.

ORAL HISTORY/STUDENT INTERVIEWS

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Interview a husband and wife. Make sure the husband and wife you select meet these two criteria: 1) they have children, and 2) the wife works outside the home.

The people you decide on may be your own parents.

Ask the interviewees the following questions. Take notes carefully. After the interview, think back over what your interviewees have said and complete the worksheet "Some Questions to Think About."

Interview Questions for the Wife

1. Where do you work? Can you describe the kind of work you do? How long have you been working there?

   Is this your first job? If not, what are some of the other jobs you have had?

2. Why do you work?

3. Do you enjoy working? Why or why not?

4. How many children do you have?

5. Did you work while they were very young? Why or why not?

6. What are some of the problems of working while being a wife and mother at the same time?

7. Do you enjoy working and being a parent at the same time?

8. What are some of the benefits of doing both?

9. How do you try to resolve some of the problems?

10. What do your husband and children think about the fact that you work? Why?

Interview Questions for the Husband

1. Where do you work? Can you describe the kind of work you do?

   How long have you been working there?

   Is this your first job? If not, what are some of the other jobs you have had?

2. Why do you work?

3. Do you enjoy working? Why or why not?

4. How many children do you have?

5. Did you work while they were very young? Why or why not?

6. What are some of the problems of working and being a husband and father at the same time?

7. Do you enjoy working and being a parent at the same time?

8. What are some of the benefits of doing both?

9. How do you try to resolve some of the problems?

10. What do your wife and children think about the fact that you work? Why?

ORAL HISTORY/STUDENT INTERVIEWS

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Compare the answers you got from the wife-mother and the husband-father. Where do you see any differences? Similarities?

2. Are there any differences in the reasons why they work?

3. Are there any differences in the jobs they have?

4. How do they view their roles as wife-mother or husband-father in relationship to their work? To their children? To each other? Are there any differences? If so, what? Can you explain those differences?

5. Given the problems they see (if any) in having both the husband and the wife working, how are they working to solve those problems? Do you think that they share the housework and child-care responsibilities? How? Why or why not?

ORAL INTERVIEW

DIRECTIONS

1. Make a date in advance with the person you want to interview. In making this contact be sure to explain the purpose of the interview and the topics you wish to cover.
2. Allow at least 30 minutes for the interview.
3. Begin the interview by explaining again the purpose of the interview and the topics you wish to cover. Be sure the interviewee consents to be interviewed.
4. Ask only one question at a time. Avoid questions which lead to yes-or-no answers. If you do get yes-or-no responses, then ask for an explanation. "Could you explain a little more, please?" Or, "Why did you feel that way?"
5. Take your notes on a separate page.
6. Be patient. Remember, most people have never been interviewed. It is an unusual experience. A person must have time to think about her or his answer. If you act as if you are in a hurry, the other person won't feel that her or his answers are important to you.

UNIT 3

Women in Change: Twentieth Century Women in Transition

WOMEN IN CHANGE
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OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. TEACHER INTRODUCTION TO UNIT
- B. MAP: WOMEN IN CHANGE AROUND THE WORLD
  1. Teacher uses background information from Teacher Introduction section to introduce the activity.
  2. Students work as a class on the map activity.

II. PERSONAL CHANGE

- A. THE REVOLT OF MOTHER
  1. Teacher introduces the story, "The Revolt of Mother."
  2. Students read story aloud.
  3. Students complete worksheet on reading.
  4. Discussion of story in class.

III. WOMEN AND POLITICAL CHANGE: THIRD WORLD WOMEN

- A. POLITICAL CHANGE
  1. Teacher uses Teacher Background to introduce the topic.
  2. Students read essay "Political Change: Third World Women."
  3. Teacher instructs students on the topic, using suggestions for class discussion.
- B. WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA
  1. Teacher uses Teacher Background and map activity to introduce the story.
  2. Students read story "The Defiance of Women: South Africa."
  3. Students complete worksheet on story.
  4. Teacher conducts class discussion.
- C. WOMEN IN REVOLUTION: CHINA
  1. Teacher uses Teacher Background to introduce the topic.
  2. Students read story "Misu, the Guerilla Girl."
  3. Students complete worksheet on story.
  4. Teacher conducts class discussion.
- D. SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA: A COMPARISON
  1. Teacher introduces international forum activity.
  2. Students complete chart, using the stories "The Defiance of Women: South Africa" and "Misu, The Guerilla Girl."
  3. Students create an international forum, "Women and Political Change."
  4. Students develop a report on the topic.

IV. WOMEN STRUGGLE TO CONSOLIDATE POLITICAL CHANGE

A. WOMEN IN CUBA

1. Teacher uses Teacher Background and map activity to introduce the topic.
2. Students read essay, "Women Struggle to Create Changes Within the Family."
3. Students take parts and read "A Woman's Place Is in the Home?" Teacher conducts class discussion of the readings.

B. THE FAMILY CODE IN CUBA

1. Teacher introduces the activity.
2. Students read "The Family Code."
3. Teacher conducts class discussion of the reading.

V. ORAL HISTORY

A. STUDENT INTERVIEWS

1. Teacher introduces students to the process of oral history and the purpose of the student interviews.
2. Teacher reviews with students the Oral Interview Directions.
3. Teacher discusses with the students the Interview Questions.
4. Students take approximately one week to complete the interviews.
5. Teacher uses discussion questions, chart and suggested activities to facilitate student sharing and analysis of interviews.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

1. Teacher introduces the readings.
2. Students read aloud the two essays on the topic.
3. Class discussion of the essays.

B. POSTER MAKING

1. Teacher introduces the activity.
2. Students design posters.
3. Teacher conducts class assessment of the posters.

C. RESEARCH PROJECT

1. Teacher introduces the activity and helps students select their projects.
2. Students complete the assignment and share their work in class.
3. Teacher uses discussion guidelines to summarize the activity and the unit.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

GOALS

Students will learn that:

1. The concerns of women bridge national and cultural boundaries.
2. Political and economic involvement upgrade the status of women and increase their feelings of self-worth.
3. The patriarchal form of the family is one of the most important aspects of women's lives requiring change if women are to have rights equal to those of their male counterparts.
4. Change in women's personal lives is influenced by political change, and personal change can result in political change.
5. Many women have been involved in some kind of change, whether personal, social or political.

OBJECTIVES

Students should be able to:

1. Recognize that change in the lives of women often begins as a personal decision.
2. Recognize that women in many parts of the world are defining for themselves the changes that will affect them.
3. Understand that political changes for women can result in a redefinition of those institutions which affect women.
4. Understand that political change for women often is accomplished by changes in the patriarchal form of the family.
5. Identify some of the reasons for change in women's work and personal life expectations.
6. Recognize that the women's movement in the U.S. is part of a worldwide movement for change.
7. Identify that International Women's Day celebrates an American woman's event.

Teacher Introduction to the Unit

In the previous units we have examined the positions of women under feudalism and industrialism and the societal structures, namely patriarchy, which maintained their subordination. We have seen that the development of an industrial technology did not necessarily liberate women, that sometimes it became merely another form of oppression. We also saw, however, that in both cases there were women who did not conform to the existing standards or who resisted their oppression. Further, we saw that women's work and creativity were critical to the functioning of society.

Women have been oppressed for much of history and there always have been those individuals who resisted oppression. In the twentieth century there is a difference. It is that women are both changing their own conditions and being changed by new realities. There is an observable international thrust as women around the world involve themselves in defining their concerns and organizing to effect change. At the same time, women in all countries are coping with change in their traditional roles as a result of phenomena such as revolutions and technological changes brought about by industrialization.

It is important that students look to women around the world, and observe and learn from their activities. In so doing, they will begin to understand the connection between women around the world who share common conditions, and learn from the strategies women have used to initiate change. Such a study provokes comparison with one's own experiences. This unit is designed to assist in this endeavor.

Although the context in which women's worldwide desire for equality varies from place to place, there are certain commonalities which unify women's efforts across national boundaries. Women always have been linked to one another through the commonality of their roles as wives and mothers. Sometimes the commonality of their subordination has been their greatest bond. In modern times another link has been forged: the desire of women everywhere to achieve genuine equality and respect in the home and in society.

The meaning of equality is defined according to the needs and priorities of each culture and country. In some nations, poverty is so extreme that economic change is closely tied to change in the position of women. In others, women play a complementary role with men (the work of each is sharply differentiated) and their desires for equality may mean trying to regain equal recognition for their special roles. And in still other countries the traditional economic role of women has been weakened by industrialization and Westernization, and women tie their demands for equality to the end of foreign economic domination. Whatever the priorities and motivations, women world wide are developing their collective strengths, are conscious of the need for positive change, and are slowly overturning their centuries-long oppression.

The role women play in changing the major political, economic, and legal institutions of a country is one aspect of change. Yet in order to see the full picture, we must be aware of the struggle in a woman's daily life to upgrade her position within the family. This unit begins with an example of a woman's change within her family, the place where women around the world receive their strongest definition of themselves as women and where they get their greatest reinforcement.

PERSONAL CHANGE

In the section on Personal Change, students will be able to discuss the actions of a woman who takes steps to alter the pattern of authority and decision making in her American farm family. On the surface, the changes Mother initiates, as described in the reading "The Revolt of Mother," may seem minor. But in actuality her decision is a major step. This story is an example of change within the family which could occur anywhere in the world.

Historically, as we have seen in previous units, the patriarchal family delineates authority relationships. This delineation, which subordinates and oppresses women, has been the greatest barrier to women's growth. Throughout the world today, even though there may be dramatic changes for women in the economic and political spheres women's lives at home remain largely traditional. Since the basis of many societal systems has been the patriarchal family model, in changing the family women not only shruggle for equality but for social change as well.

POLITICAL CHANGE

Personal change often precedes the involvement of women in political change. We use political change to mean altering the power structure at governmental levels or changing the prevailing legal order. In this section students work with readings from South Africa and China which evidence clear challenges to the traditional authorities. Here women organize to better their situations and delineate the conditions which oppress them. In the process of their political involvement, changes in their personal lives occur as well.

STRUGGLE TO CONSOLIDATE WOMEN'S GAINS

This section shows the change which may occur after women have gained a sense of their power and have achieved some political rights. Students will examine how working women in Cuba have defined their needs and then acted collectively to incorporate their goals into the total fabric of society. For example, by developing the Family Code, Cuban women identified the family as one of the most important aspects of their lives requiring change and successfully redefined the rights and responsibilities of men and women within the family.

STUDENT ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

The oral history activities allow students to examine change in women they know while making their own knowledge of women in change more concrete. The interviews will focus on personal changes in the lives of American women, on the ways women have been involved in political and social change, and on the effects of the women's movement on their lives.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The concluding section is designed to provide students with activities that summarize and reinforce what they have learned about women's push for change. Furthermore, these activities provide an opportunity to place the people of the readings — Shanti, Misu, Mother — within the context of an international women's movement.

To understand women's issues, students must begin to understand the meaning, dimensions and inevitability of change. No present situation is static, and personal, political and societal change is brought about by people changing in small ways. It is from these small struggles and personal decisions for change that history is made.

WOMEN IN CHANGE

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of this activity is to provide an introduction to the unit and to show students the global extent to which women are involved in change.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

A. Have the students give examples of change. Examples should cover changes that are personal, social, and political. Write the examples on the board. Try, as a class, to define change. Make the definition broad so that it covers as many of the examples given as possible.

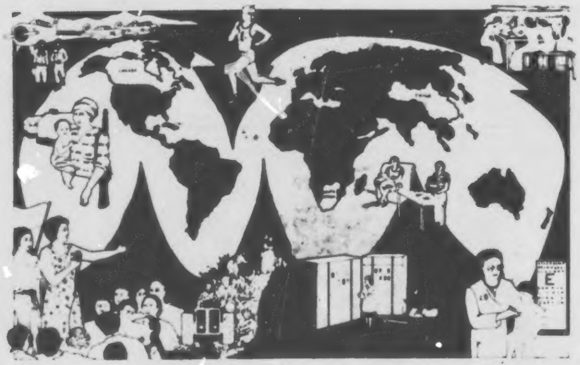
B. Ask students to name one woman who was, or is, involved in change.

C. Ask the class: What are some of the things women are trying to change today? Make a list on the board.

D. Examine the map, "Women in Change Around the World." Let students describe what the women are doing. Write these activities on the board.

E. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion

1. Which activities seem to show women in new roles?
2. Are there activities shown here which do not seem to show women in new roles?
3. Are there countries where women writing or women driving a tractor would be a sign that women are doing new things and their roles are changing? Why?
4. Can you think of activities American women do that would show them in new roles? List these on the board.



PERSONAL CHANGE

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Reading the story presented in this section, "The Revolt of Mother," students will recall the information from previous units on the nature of women's traditional role within the patriarchal family. Students will see how Sara Penn, the mother in the story, produced a change within the family, and notice how this change influenced her family and possibly the community. Students should begin to see that change in the lives of women often begins as a personal decision.

This reading is adapted from a story written by Mary Wilkins Freeman, a nineteenth century New Englander who wrote poignantly about women of that period. Our illustrations have modernized the setting somewhat because our focus is on women in the twentieth century.

The story is intended to be used as an example of relationships within a traditional patriarchal family which could occur in a farm setting in many parts of the world. It is not our intention that the context within which the story is discussed be limited to 19th or early 20th century America.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the information above to introduce the story to the class.

   In this lesson we are looking at change in one's personal life. This means a change in one's relationships with others, change in one's personal growth and development, and any personal decision which indicates a new direction for an individual.

2. Have students give examples of personal change.

3. Introduce the story, "The Revolt of Mother."
   - When you hear the word "revolt," what do you think of?
   - Does it mean a big change or a little one?
   - Is it possible for one person to revolt?
   - Can a person revolt within a family?

4. Read the story. It works well to assign parts and to read the story aloud. The parts are Mother, Sammy (the son), Father, the narrator, and Nanny (the daughter).

5. After the reading, have the students answer the questions on their student worksheet.

6. Review the worksheets. List their answers on the board under Tasks Men Did/Women Did, Father's Concerns/Mother's Concerns, Decisions Father Made/Mother Made. If your class worked with the Women under Feudalism unit, have them compare these items with "The Wife of Martin Guerre."

STUDENT ACTIVITY

A. **IMPORTANT CONCEPTS** and words to be emphasized

patriarchy	patriarchal family
relationships	revolt

B. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion

1. Whose responsibilities within the family do you consider to be more important?
2. Recalling the unit Women under Feudalism, who had authority within the patriarchal family?
3. Why did Mother decide to move?
4. How did Mother's change affect: the father?
   the son?
   the daughter?
5. Do you think Mother's revolt changed her relationship with Father? In what ways? Speculate on some things that might change in the future.
6. Do you think Mother's revolt might influence women in the community? How?
7. Have you known people who made changes in their family? How has this change affected them? Did it make a difference to the lives of people close to them?
8. If Mother went to a public meeting about changing the conditions for women, what kinds of things would she talk about?

C. **CLASS ACTIVITY**

Make a list of the issues Mother might talk about at a public meeting. Use a big piece of butcher paper. Label it "Conditions Women Want to Change." This list will be used in later activities. Save it.

WOMEN AND POLITICAL CHANGE: THIRD WORLD WOMEN

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this section students will read an essay and two stories about women in political change to learn about the common needs and strategies for change among women in two Third World countries. One story is about a woman's demonstration against the restrictions of apartheid in South Africa, and the other is about a girl amidst the revolution in China. Both stories show clear evidences of women's challenge to oppression in countries where traditional authority has strongly resisted women's struggles for their rights. Students will learn about the complex interplay between active political change by women and changes this may bring within the family, society and the individual.

The teacher essay, "The Nature of Women's Political Change in Third World Countries," provides a general overview of political change and Third World women. Specific information about South Africa and China precedes the stories from those countries.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the background essay, "The Nature of Women's Political Change in Third World Countries," to introduce the section to students.
2. Assign the student essay, "Political Change: Third World Women."
3. Lead a class discussion of the essay:
   - What changes might occur for a woman within her family and within her community as she takes an active part in seeking political change?
   - Would similar changes occur for a man?
   - Do people accept change in men more easily than change in women?
   - In developing countries, what issues might concern a woman more than in industrialized countries?
   - Are there groups of women within the U.S. who might be concerned with issues similar to those of women in developing countries? Who might they be? Why would their concerns be similar?

The following terms and questions for class discussion are intended for use throughout the section.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

A. **IMPORTANT CONCEPTS** and words to be emphasized

Third World: refers to developing countries. Many have been colonized. These countries comprise two-thirds of the people of the world. The First and Second World countries are those in industrialized nations headed by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

Guerilla: a person who engages in irregular warfare such as harassment or sabotage.

Mobilization: large groups of people organized into action.

Liberation: the act of freeing a country or a person from domination by outside power.

Exploitation: unjust use of another person for one's own profit or advantage. Also applies to countries—one country exploits the people and resources of another country.

Tradition: information, beliefs, and customs handed down from one generation to another, thus creating a continuity of social attitudes and customs.

Militia: a part of the armed forces of a country, subject to being called to action in an emergency.

Organizing: bringing together individuals and groups to work systematically for common goals.

Political change: change in the power structure and the way a government is controlled.

Colonialism: foreign penetration and control of a country's economic and political systems.

Apartheid: the special laws and ideology which separate white and black South Africans, and give complete power to the ruling minority.

Passbook: the reference book every South African over the age of 16 must carry. The book must be produced on demand. It contains the holder's identity in terms of residence, employment, and tax receipts. In practice, passbook checks are made only on black South Africans and on those white South Africans in opposition to apartheid.

B. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion

1. Give examples to show how collective organizing gives women a strength they could not achieve through individual effort.
2. **Give examples of practices in South Africa which show that the impact of Western values and institutions has weakened the power and authority that women have had within their traditional societies.**
3. What are the priorities of women striving for equality in South Africa? Explain.
4. Within the U.S., are there groups of women whose priorities sound similar to the priorities of women in South Africa? Explain.
5. As women became involved in political struggles for change, how did their new skills increase their value to the total effort for change?
6. In what ways did women's political struggle change their personal relationships?

THE NATURE OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

BACKGROUND FOR TEACHER

Women from developing Third World countries have had quite different priorities than those from industrialized countries. Many feel that women's problems cannot be solved unless political and economic relationships between the rich and poor are restructured or unless they are free from foreign control. In contrast, middle-class women in industrialized countries have tended to emphasize the limitations of sex-role stereotyping and have worked for the equality of roles and equal pay for equal work.

In the period covered in the student readings, the women who sought change had very little to lose. The South African reading represents women from those parts of the world where colonization and Westernization had increased women's burdens. Although some men were chosen by the colonizer to "modernize" and were brought into the new technology and government structure, the mass of women remained solidly fixed in the old ways. At the same time they suffered a loss in prestige as the traditional ways were devalued. The result was that women often worked harder than before, and were acknowledged less. The extreme racism of the South African government further added to women's burdens in that country.

The women's liberation movement in these countries thus has been linked with the struggle to expel or change the domination of Western institutions. Therefore, the conflict of women against men did not develop as both sexes fought together against the system that exploited the majority. Instead, resisting women banded together to struggle against governmental interferences with their traditional rights. Or they fought together with men against the system that exploited them both. Women's movements tended completely to be identified with the nationalist movement or the movement for revolutionary change.

The China reading represents the efforts of new political forces to overthrow the old feudal, patriarchal system and to bring China's peasants into the modern world. Again, as in Africa, even though women in China became aware of the need to struggle against the restrictive aspects of their own culture, this effort has been part of the total societal push for a more equitable system and is not seen as a separate women's struggle.

Yet the readings impart a sense that as women participated in the struggle for political change, there were changes in their personal lives. The women did not become fully liberated, but they became more aware of their potential as they learned new skills and raised their expectations about their futures. Their relationships within their family and friends changed as they either confronted the resistance of people who knew them or expressed a desire to establish more equitable male-female relationships.

The readings also show the strength that women give each other through collective organizing. There is an increasing consciousness among Third World women of the need to organize together in order to produce the greatest change. This quote is from the *Organization of Omani Women:*

> *The liberation of women does not come through men making concessions to women, but through constant organized struggle by women, through their effective contribution at the political, social and productive levels.* [1]

Important, too, is the fact that as women become politically involved, their status in the total community is raised. In both China and South Africa, as women became involved in the struggle, their new roles and new skills became vital to the success of the effort. South African women in recent years have been given leadership positions in the resistance movement and Chinese women have been trained to participate in every level of the revolutionary effort during and after the military struggle. It became clear that in order for change to occur in the total structure, women must be integrated more fully into society and their positions upgraded.

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[1] *African Liberation Calendar*, Liberation Support Movement, Oakland, Calif., 1977. P. 3.

THE DEFIANCE OF WOMEN: SOUTH AFRICA

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this story students will read about an actual event in 1956 when black women in South Africa demonstrated to seek to change the restrictions placed on them by new pass laws. The teacher background essay is designed to provide the teacher with information about conditions for women in South Africa.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the background essay, "Women in South Africa," to introduce the activity.
2. Have students locate South Africa on the map, "Women in Change Around the World." Ask: Which of these pictures, regardless of race, fits in with your feelings about what women in South Africa do? Why?
3. Assign the story, "The Defiance of Women: South Africa," for student reading.
4. Have students complete the worksheet on the story.
5. Review the worksheet questions and use the following questions in a class discussion of the topic.

QUESTIONS to facilitate class discussion

1. From the examples cited on the worksheets of life in South Africa, how do you think apartheid keeps blacks down?
2. What options did Nandi and Shanti have to resist the extension of the pass laws to include women? Speculate: Could they vote? have any rights of protest? ask for a raise? take the day off? refuse to patronize white-owned stores?
3. In what ways did collective demonstrations give women strength in a way individual effort could not?
4. What did men stand to lose by supporting women? Was men's support really ever expected by the women? In tribal life in Africa, had men and women worked together politically?
5. What was the impact of this massive demonstration on:
   - the government
   - the women's families
   - the women themselves
   - the future struggle

WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA
Teacher Background

Whites of mainly Dutch background (the Boers) have been in South Africa for three hundred years. They were newcomers to a society which consisted of peoples native to Africa. Until the discovery of the diamond and gold mines, the Boers were farmers and sheepherders. But with the development of the mines, whites in South Africa turned into a middle-class group of foremen and managers. By 1970 less than 3% of the salary-earning whites were unskilled.[1]

This feat, however, was accomplished through the exploitation of the black South Africans, who became low paid, unskilled workers in the mines and white-owned industries. The oppressed position of blacks in South Africa developed as white economic control became political control and a system of apartheid was developed, making blacks foreigners within their own country. Apartheid is a maze of regulations supported by continuous intimidation, terror, arrests and imprisonment. Even though whites make up only a small percentage of the total population (17.5%), they are in total control and employ the latest technological advances to maintain themselves and their repressive police state. Attempts at political representation for blacks have been unsuccessful. Black political organizations are limited by the government. African trade unions are illegal. Good housing, skilled jobs, good education and medical care are all reserved for the whites.

APARTHEID

Apartheid is a system which keeps people in place according to their wealth, sex, and skin color. Apartheid has been used in South Africa to maintain the political and economic dominance of whites, while economically exploiting blacks. The apartheid government claims that South Africa is made up of ten separate nations—one all-white (regardless of the languages, national origins, or cultures of the various whites in South Africa), and nine others made up of blacks of nine different nations, determined mainly by language. The government geographically separates these ten nations into homelands (once called reserves) under the guise of trying to restore tribal customs, and it encourages "separate development." Blacks may enter and leave their homelands only at the will of the government, and the government is free to relocate blacks who live too near or within the white homelands.

The nine black nations, of course, cannot determine where their homeland should be. The whites took 87% of all the country, including the major towns and cities and industrial wealth. The blacks have been given the most inhospitable lands. Thus, for blacks, "separate development" has meant minimal education, limited or no health care, inadequate housing and, of course, few jobs. Blacks must form a large migrant labor pool which seeks work in the white areas. They are allowed to live near their work only as sojourners and only as long as they can be usefully employed by the whites.

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[1] "Women and Revolution." *Journal of the Women's Commission on the Sparticist League.* No. 16, Winter 1977, p. 2.

APARTHEID PARTICULARLY OPPRESSIVE TO BLACK WOMEN

One expert described South Africa as a society supported by "a vast superstructure of custom and law, in which the habits and institutions of an old, pastoral society are cemented into a modern industrialized state—all of which rests on the backs of black women."[1] The special laws of apartheid have helped to support this superstructure.

A pressing disability for women is the restriction apartheid places on their movement and residence. For example, if a woman has a husband who is working in the towns or in the mines, she will be separated from him for a long period of time. Mineworkers are allowed home for only one two-week holiday a year.

On the other hand, a woman who is qualified to live in an urban area (perhaps she was born there), and who marries a man who is not, is forced to leave. And even those families living intact within a white area may be subject to relocation to their homelands at the will of the government.

HARD WORK

The women who are left on the homelands become the main source of family strength. They are forced to assume the man's duties at home and find themselves with the total responsibility of the family. A woman must not only do the work she has done for centuries, but also must do men's traditional work—hut building and ploughing, for instance. On inadequate land, millions of women are supposed to scratch out the subsistence to nourish and raise a family. Often their families are augmented by children from women working in areas that prohibit them from keeping their families or by the children of dead or imprisoned relatives. On the homelands the poverty is extreme. Child deaths from starvation or disease are common.

Women are barred from most work available to blacks in the cities, and even in their homelands many of the jobs are reserved for the men. Those who do join the urban labor force do so chiefly as domestic servants. There they live in inadequate housing or live with the white family, where they are not allowed to keep their own children — as in the case of Shanti, in the student reading.

LEGAL RESTRICTION

In the old society where extended families rather than individuals constituted the center of one's life, women had clearly defined roles and a status within their family. Both sexes were valued and seen as complementary. Under apartheid the family is dispersed. Women cannot own property, inherit, act as guardians for their children, enter into contracts, sue, and so forth. They clearly no longer have the protection and respect they had in the old society.

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[1] Hilda Bernstein, *For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears: Women in Apartheid South Africa*, International Defense and Aid Fund, London, 1975, p. 8.

PASS LAWS

The greatest symbol of legal repression is the pass law. In existence in some form since the 19th century, pass laws have been used to control the "natives" and to operate the extended migratory labor system. They always have been hated by the blacks, who see them as one of many laws that make them slaves in the place of their birth.

By the 1950's, the time of the student reading, the authorities were issuing all-encompassing passbooks. The book contained the holder's identity card, place of residence, employment contract, tax receipts, and so forth. Not only were these books used to limit black mobility, but they also were used as a way to control all aspects of black life. Daily, large numbers of people could, and can, be prosecuted for infringements of the pass laws. Because the police could enter communities on pass raids, mothers would return home never sure of finding their husbands or sons there. Boys sent to do an errand might disappear — part of a sweep of pass "offenders" who would then be sent to work on a farm where white farmers were allowed to do with them as they pleased. An arrest for a pass offense might not be confirmed for weeks. Wives and mothers then waited helplessly for news of their relatives.

Before the mid-1950's only men had to carry passbooks. Then it was announced that by 1956 women, too, would need them. The intention was to force all women and children who were not needed as domestics out of the towns and into their homelands. At that point most of the South African women's political struggle became centered on anti-passbook demonstrations.

Since 1913 women from different parts of South Africa had been conducting sporadic demonstrations against the passes. By 1956 the anti-pass movement had grown. The largest demonstration is described in the student reading. Although the central figure, Shanti, is fictionalized, the events of that day, which since has been designated "Women's Day," are true.

POLITICAL TACTICS

Women in Africa have a tradition of collective action. In village life they have worked and played in same-sex groups. They are the prime cultivators and traders, and often do this work together. Polygamy also created a female working unit. Traditionally, too, women have been able to take a position in the family and village on the issues that affect them. Usually they do this through group discussion and action. When there is resistance their tactics have been to stage sit-ins, to refuse to cook, and to refuse to carry out other tasks.

The anti-passbook movement employed these traditional tactics. Even in jail, the women singing their "freedom" songs interspersed with their hymns so infuriated the officials that in 1960 singing in jail was outlawed.

In the early 1960's harsh anti-terrorism laws were passed which instituted mock trials, long periods of detainment, and torture as methods to suppress the freedom movement. Women were persecuted on the same charges as men, and the stories of individual heroism and courage from South Africa include the names of many women. The long period of non-violent activities had ended and women and their former organizations became part of the underground resistance. Women joined the national liberation movement and became increasingly influential.

Women in South Africa now fight along with men for their full civil rights. Yet the burden on them is particularly heavy, because with their arrests their children are left unattended and must be sent from relative to relative or left alone. Women place a high priority on seeking some measure of control over their lives. Thus, in the process of their struggle for political and legal change, they also are struggling for change in their social position as well.

WOMEN IN REVOLUTION: CHINA

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In the South African reading, women demonstrated collectively to try to win back the rights they once had. Since many women in Africa historically have done things together, collectively, this may be seen as one way African women change using traditional methods. The difference was that large numbers of women were involved and that they took this brave action against a totalitarian government that did not grant black women their traditional right to protest collectively.

In the next story students read about a young women in China in the 1940's who more radically challenged the role expectations about how women should act. Her political involvement came at a time when China was in a revolutionary stage of political change. In China a new form of government and social system was replacing the old. As students read the story, they should notice the events that caused the changes in this woman's life and how her involvement in these events in turn changed her view of herself. The teacher background essay, "Women in Revolution: China," will provide the teacher with information on China in this period.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Use the information in the Teacher Background on China to introduce this topic to students.
2. Have students find China on the map, "Women in Change Around the World" (see introductory section). Ask students to select the activities that women are shown doing that might apply to women in China today. (There are often good illustrations of Chinese women in new roles in magazines such as *China Pictorial* and *China Reconstructs*.)
3. Use the Teacher Instructions to introduce the story. Assign "Misu, the Guerilla Girl" to be read.
4. Have students complete the worksheet questions.
5. Review the student worksheet questions.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

A. **QUESTIONS** to facilitate class discussion

1. Speculate on what you think will happen to Misu in the future.
2. Do you think that the traditional subservient role that was expected of Chinese women (Misu in her marriage) can be totally erased? Why or why not?
3. How do the "Speak Bitterness" sessions seem similar to women's consciousness-raising groups here? How do they seem different?

B. **ACTIVITIES**

1. Assign a group of students to rewrite the story of Misu in dialogue form. Have students act out the story.
2. Ask students to illustrate Misu's story. Use "Misu in her marriage" and "Misu, the guerilla girl" as focal points.

WOMEN IN REVOLUTION: CHINA
Teacher Background

Change in the position of women in China, since the days of their "bitter past," has been dramatic. Although impressive movement has occurred since the Revolution in 1949, the first struggles for women's rights began in the nineteenth century when Western ideas pervaded China's intellectual climate.

With the overthrow of the Manchu Dynasty (1911), the new republic granted some important rights to upper- and middle-class women, such as the right to an education. A middle-class women's movement appeared which called for women's suffrage and reforms in the family, such as a choice of marriage partner, freedom of association and greater equality between the sexes. Thus, by the late 1920's, many ideas about sexual equality were accepted by many upper-class women.

It was, however, the Communists who saw potential for change in groups other than the more privileged. They regarded women's oppression as an issue which could only be solved through the total overthrow of China's repressive system.

In 1927 Chiang Kai-shek initiated a bloody purge of all Communists from the government. In one week fifty thousand people were executed. A reign of terror also was directed against politically active women. Many of these women began to see that reformist change was not the answer for China and that the exploitative structure which held the masses down would have to be overthrown.

The Communists retreated into the countryside and there slowly began to build a power base. In the period that followed, Mao Tse-Tung emerged as the energetic leader and led his army (Red Army or 8th Route Army) in the long struggle against Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists (Kuomintang).

Once in control of a region, the Communists instituted major reforms, such as land redistribution, and established intensive re-education programs to help families adjust to the new society. The task was enormous. The task was to transform the total structure of society.

In 1931 Japan seized Manchuria and in 1937 initiated an all-out invasion of the rest of China. From then until 1941, the Communists and the Nationalists formed an uneasy partnership to fight against this foreign enemy. The Japanese occupation of China was harsh, and women participated in the struggles through strikes, demonstrations and actual combat. In 1945 the Japanese withdrew from China and full-scale civil war between the Nationalists and the Communists erupted again until 1949 when, in the final months of the war, as Mao said, "the cities fell like ripe fruit" and the Communists were victorious.

MISU'S STORY

The student reading about Misu occurs at the end of the Japanese occupation and the resumption of the civil war. Her story personifies a major Communist goal: to mobilize and activate those groups which were most oppressed under China's traditional system. Misu, a peasant and a woman, clearly fits this category. Even her suicide attempt was not unusual. This class of women, sometimes having no other option, chose suicide as the only way out.

One of the goals of the peasant movement was to overthrow the old authorities of the elders, the ancestral gods, and the patriarchal families. The idea was not to abolish the family, but rather to create a new one based on equality between the sexes. In the past the family had kept woman in isolation and under the rigid control of her clan. Although more privileged women already were in the process of moving out from beneath oppressive family structures, peasants still were in the grasp of the feudal structure. Mao wrote:

> *Political authority, clan authority, religious authority, and the authority of the husband, represent the ideology and institution of feudalism and patriarchy; they are the four bonds that have bound the Chinese people, particularly the peasants.*[1]

As the Communists consolidated their power in an area, they sought changes in the family. One way was through new marriage laws. Women were granted inheritance rights and the right to divorce and remarry after a husband's death. Misu's divorce could occur only with the arrival of the 8th Route Army and the institution of a new way of life.

Women also were granted the right to own property. The real key to breaking the feudal structure was land reform. When the peasants were given enough land to make their labors productive and when the landlords had to cultivate the same amount of land as everyone else, the old exploitative system was broken. Women were given the right to own land and no longer were forced to have the many sons previously needed to insure that the family would have enough labor to work their inadequate holdings.

To make women aware of their rights, women were organized around their special needs. One goal was to make them aware of their oppression and to encourage them to fight against it. "Speak Bitterness" sessions were created where groups of women met and recounted the horror stories of their treatment by husbands and in-laws. They encouraged their sisters to do likewise and thus helped bring to the whole village the courage of "half of China." Using the support of each other, women overcame the obstacles and resistance of their elders and their men. By having a chance to speak in public, they gained a new sense of political power. The response of women to support each other was crucial. In Old China women were isolated from one another and were taught to be submissive.

Another goal was to have women participate more fully in work outside the family. In this period, women primarily were mobilized to work in the fields and do support work for men on the front line. But Misu, at the end of the reading, talks about her desire to work in a factory. After 1949, women's productivity in all areas was stressed, the legal barriers to their advancement were removed, and the government created support services to assist women to work outside their homes:

> *When women all over the country rise up, that will be the day of victory for the Chinese revolution.*[2]

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[1] Merkel and Salaff, "Women and Revolution: The Lesson of the Soviet Union and China," *Women in China*, Marilyn Young, editor, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1973, p. 162.

[2] Chou Ken-Chou, "How Our Village Got Equal Pay for Equal Work," *China Reconstructs*, (March 1975).

SOUTH AFRICA AND CHINA: A COMPARISON
An International Forum

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

This activity allows students to compare women's situation in South Africa and China. Students are encouraged to compare strategies for change employed by women in these countries as well as consider the similarities and differences between the women's movement in America and in developing countries.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Divide the class into two groups. One will represent South Africa; the other, China. They are "representatives" taking part in an internatinal conference on "Women and Political Struggle." The teacher might want to assign a third group of students to represent the United States and have them do the necessary research to present a report.

2. Have students, individually or working in small groups, fill in the student chart, "Women in South Africa and China." Students will use the information they have gathered from "Misu, the Guerilla Girl" and "The Defiance of Women: South Africa." The group representing South Africa should fill in the South Africa column; the group representing China should fill in the China column. At this time the third column, Shared Experiences, is to be omitted.

3. While the groups are working, write the chart on the board.

4. After the students have completed their chart, each group should then report to the forum on the particulars of the position of women in their country. The representatives should use the points addressed on the chart in giving their reports. Students should give specific examples from the stories whenever possible.

5. Ask a student recorder to record the information given on the chart on the board.

6. Using the information collected under each column, the forum should together then complete the third column on those women's experiences which were similar for each country. Lead students through each item — for example, Conditions to Be Changed — and have students place the similarities in the third column, Shared Experiences. Then ask students to add this information to their charts.

7. Finally, ask students to go through the items listed on the chart to see which could pertain to women in America today.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. The forum is to develop a report covering the following points:
    - Issues that concern women in Third World countries.
    - Strategies for change for women in Third World countries.
    - Notation of some significant similarities between the women's struggle for equality in the U.S. and developing countries.
    - Listing of some significant differences between U.S. women's concerns and the goals of women in developing countries.
    - Resistance to change in women's roles. A comparison between the three countries.
    - Strategies for an international women's movement.
2. Have students review the list started in Section One, *Conditions Women Want to Change*, and make additions to the list based on the activities of this section.

WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA AND AND CHINA

	SOUTH AFRICA	CHINA	SHARED EXPERIENCES
Conditions to Be Changed			
Events Which Caused Political Change			
Goals			

	SOUTH AFRICA	CHINA	SHARED EXPERIENCES
Problems			
Effect of Organizing on: • **Family** • **Men** • **Society** • **Women's Personal Lives**			

WOMEN STRUGGLE TO CONSOLIDATE POLITICAL CHANGE
Women in Cuba

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In the last section students read about the lives of women who were politically active, and examined the issues that were important to them as well as the strategies they used to achieve change. This section shows the changes that may still be needed after women have gained some political rights. In Cuba, women's rights looked good on paper and were being implemented in the economic and political spheres. But there remained a gap between this and the reality of their lives within their homes. And so it was that women in Cuba defined their needs and worked together to get laws passed to restructure the rights and responsibilities of men and women within the family.

In this section students will read about the changes which occurred for women after the Cuban Revolution. They will learn about the political process through which women pressured for change, and the changes within the family which ultimately were required by law.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. **Use the background essay for teachers, "Women in Cuba," to introduce this section.**
2. **Have students use the map, "Women in Change Around the World," to locate Cuba. (See Introduction to unit.) Ask students which of the pictures on the map might represent the lesson for today on Cuba.**
3. **Have students read the essay "Women Struggle to Create Changes within the Family."**
4. **Ask students to take parts and read aloud "A Woman's Place Is in the Home?" Have someone who knows Spanish read the cartoon which precedes the reading.**
5. **Use the following questions to facilitate a class discussion of the readings.**

STUDENT ACTIVITY

QUESTIONS to facilitate class discussion

1. Does the conversation between Elena, Ramon, Marta and Juan seem at all familiar?
2. Can you add some pro and con arguments about men helping in the home that you have heard?
3. Can you think of some problems that arise for women when they work outside the home?
4. What happens in families you know where there is one working parent raising the children?
5. What responsibilities do you have at home?
6. Why were women in Cuba encouraged to work outside the home?
7. Give examples of how women in Cuba were assisted by the government in this change of roles.

WOMEN IN CUBA
Teacher Background

PRE-1959 REVOLUTION

Cuba, before its revolution, was somewhat less rigid in its treatment of women than other Latin countries were. Church and state had been separated early and the urban areas were influenced by the social customs of the United States. Further, Cuba's more modern, wage-earning plantation system was less patriarchal than the large hacienda systems found elsewhere in Latin America.

Nevertheless, the teachings of the Catholic Church, the Spanish heritage of male domination, and certain African customs which devalued women remained strong influences in the culture. Clearly observable was the double standard in behavior expected of males and females. Males were encouraged to attain the ideal of the virile, daring, forceful man of the world. The "ideal woman" was to have children and stay at home to care for them. A woman was expected to support the honor of the male by preserving her own "honor." Women were not allowed to be alone with men who were not their husbands. They were to suffer the infidelities and mistreatment of their husbands without seeking a divorce. In short, women belonged in the *casa*; men in the *calle*.

On top of this was the reality of the continuing economic underdevelopment of Cuba. Cuba had been subjected to U.S. colonial and neo-colonial domination. In 1953, more than one-half of the best farm land in Cuba was in foreign hands.[1] Cuba had a one-crop economy and had to import food to feed its people. Foreign-owned companies dominated Cuba's economy.[2] In 1958, 28% of the labor force was unemployed or employed only seasonally.

Cuba's class structure was set up to support this neo-colonialism. The masses were poor. The middle class was not strong, and there was an elite upper class. For women, this meant that only upper-class women could fit the ideal of the woman whose role was primarily domestic. Poor Cuban women had to work, although the jobs open to them were sharply limited. Most women worked in the domestic services. The acute poverty of the countryside forced women, many young, to the capital where they survived as maids or prostitutes.

REVOLUTIONARY WOMEN

In Cuban history women have always played an outstanding role in insurrectionary struggles. In the wars of 1868 and 1895, the Mambis women (mostly black) played very important parts in the armed struggles against Spain.

In the period of underground activity against Cuba's dictator, Fulgencio Batista, some women were able to emerge from behind their traditional supportive role to demand an equal status in the revolutionary movement. The revolution, in fact, was committed to involving women in its process. Castro said, "Women have to be revolutionary because they are simultaneously exploited as workers and discriminated against as women."[1] Thus, those women who did participate in the armed struggle became models to show that women were capable, and that women were important to the Revolution.

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[1] Margaret Randall, *Cuban Women Now*, Toronto, 1974, p. 8.

[2] Benflesdorf and Hageman, "Women and Work," *Cuba Review*, September, 1974, p. 4.

CUBA AFTER 1959

> *If we were asked what the most revolutionary thing is that the Revolution is doing, we would answer that it is precisely this—the revolution that is occurring among the women of our country.*[2]
>
> Fidel Castro

Beginning in 1959 the new government's primary task was to mobilize and resocialize the men and women of Cuba. For women it was especially important to raise the literacy rate and to move women from their homes out into the labor market and into new jobs.

Education for the majority of semi-literate women was a first priority. Courses were given for domestic servants, for prostitutes, and for peasant women. Girls were incorporated into the educational system at every level. By 1970, 40% of the students in higher education were women.[3]

A number of factors account for the change in women's work role since 1959. There was, and is, a labor shortage in Cuba. With the mass emigration of 600,000 people, Cuban men and women had to be trained to assume the jobs left vacant by the emigrants. The United States' economic embargo also created economic problems that resulted in the need for women to participate in building the new economy by going to work. Cuba, fighting its way out of underdevelopment, needed every citizen in this struggle. The principles of the Revolution to make women equal, and to free them from their economic dependency on men, gave support to the push to bring women fully into the labor market.

Women were trained for every type of job available, which included work as heads of plants, leaders in armed forces, mechanics, and dock workers. Before entering the labor market, women were encouraged to study to make sure that they would get good jobs. Before the Revolution only 11.5% of Cuban women were in the labor force. Now Cuban women account for 34% of the labor force.

Women can now participate in politics. At the grassroots level their participation is greater than that of the men. The neighborhood-organized Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR) enable people to voice their demands and make decisions about their lives at a local level. Subcommittees within the CDR's recruit volunteers to work in agriculture, to stand guard duty, to prevent neighborhood crime, to administer vaccines, to encourage adult education, and to call meetings about problems, such as noise and litter, that arise on the block level. Everyone over fourteen years of age is encouraged to participate. Women, particularly those who do not work outside their homes, form the backbone of the CDR sub committees.

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[1] Susan Kaufman Purcell, "Modernizing Women for a Modern Society: The Cuban Case," *Female and Male in Latin America*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973, pp. 261-2.

[2] Margaret Randall, *Cuban Women Now*, Toronto, 1974, p. 24.

[3] Benglesdorf and Hageman, "Women and Work," *Cuba Review*, September 1974, p. 5.

The Cuban government has attempted to secure for women the support services they need in order to work, study, and participate politically. There is free health care, free housing, and free education. Of great importance are the *circulos infantiles*, free child-care centers, where infants six months old to school-age children may stay all day. Many work place have cafeterias where families may eat all their meals.

In 1960, the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) was created to help women begin to take control of their lives. Its goal was to incorporate women into the economic, political and social life of the country. Today its membership is 81% of all Cuban women. The women who have joined the Federation through the years have sought to take action to upgrade the position of women. They have gathered information and documentation of the special problems of women and brought them to the Communist Party and state organizations for attention and action.

Resistance to this new life for women was substantial at first. In fact, many of the Cuban emigrants cited their inability to handle the role changes as one of the reasons for their exodus.[1] Many women eligible for work resisted. Often they cited their husband's attitude as the reason. A major problem was the continuing resistance of men to help with domestic and child care. The Federation of Cuban Women attempted to counter this resistance through extensive personal contacts with families. Discussion groups were formed to deal with attitudinal change. Men who had trouble adjusting not only to women's changes, but to the resultant changes in the definition of what it meant to be male, were encouraged to reject their concept of respect based on "machismo" and to seek respect based on achievement for their country and commitment to the goals of the Revolution. Men were asked to see Cubans as "new men" and "new women" — socially and economically useful to the revolution.

THE FAMILY CODE

A major inroad into the resistance to changing traditional sex roles was undertaken with the passage of the Family Code. The Code reiterated the total equality of women and men in all aspects of Cuban life, beginning with the family.

> *All the norms relating to marriage rest on the principle of the absolute juristic equality between men and women, of reciprocal duties between the one and the other, of mutual obligations with respect to the children and in the contribution to the maintenance of the home and the realization of domestic duties.*[2]

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[1] Geoffrey Fox, "Honor, Shame and Women's Liberation in Cuba," *Female and Male in Latin America*, pp. 274-9.

[2] Karen Wald, *Children of Che*, Ramparts Press, Palo Alto, 1978, p. 255.

The most controversial article in the Code was the one that required husbands and wives to share fully in the housework. In this way, the Code addressed the problem of women's double shift: full-time work plus primary responsibility for the household.

What steps led to the passage of this important piece of legislation? By the 1970s the first flush of revolutionary fervor had worn off and women were beginning to question their extra revolutionary participation. On their own they began to demand change loudly. Their confidence had reached the point where, as one woman said, "Women feel that they are a part of society and that if they contribute to it, they can receive from it."[1]

The government, too, was beginning to be aware of the fact that women were not getting elected to higher offices and that the old attitudes about women's roles remained in force and were holding women down.

Discussions were held among women workers, with the FMC leading the way. Women spoke out collectively and as individuals about their many concerns—family planning, maternity leave, adoption, and family tasks. In 1974 the government responded to these pressures by creating the Family Code.

The Family Code was presented as a proposal that was to be debated, article by article, by the Cuban people before a vote on it was taken. Intensive, lively discussions followed in every neighborhood and workplace. As a result of this participation the Code was made more liberal. The Code as originally submitted stated that men *should help* their wives with housework. The Code as finally written stated that men and women *have equal domestic responsibility*. The student reading, "A Woman's Place Is the Home?" comes from this period of national debate.

On March 8, 1975, the Family Code became law, after having been ratified by an overwhelming majority of Cubans. Enforcement was to come through support from the Communist Party, the people's court, places of work, and local neighborhood groups. Re-education or assignment to farm work is the usual punishment for not complying with the law. However, this type of enforcement is rare. Most problems are handled through discussion in the neighborhood CDR's or at the woman's workplace. If there is continuing non-compliance, women usually seek a divorce.

Vestiges of male dominance still remain in Cuba, although boasting about one's machismo is no longer fashionable. Re-education about new roles continues. In the younger families changes are truly observable. The real hope is to change the attitudes of the next generation.

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[1] Margaret Randall, *Cuban Women Now*, Toronto, 1974, p. 218.

WOMEN STRUGGLE TO CONSOLIDATE POLITICAL GAINS

The Family Code in Cuba

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

In this activity students will learn about the Family Code and the steps by which it became law.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the Family Code by stating the concept that sometimes, even when there are changes in women's work and they participate in activities outside the home, women's tasks within the home remain the same. Discuss briefly steps women can take to create new relationships within the home. Sara Penn ("The Revolt of Mother"), can be used as an example. Suggest that women in Cuba acted together to seek a permanent change in their family situation.
2. Read "The Family Code" aloud in class. Begin by asking students to look at the picture and read it in Spanish.
3. Conduct a class discussion of "The Family Code," using the following:

A. **SPECIFIC POINTS** for class discussion

1. Women defined the family as the sphere most resistant to new roles for men and women.
2. Women worked collectively to seek change in the family.
3. The Family Code was not handed down from the government for the people to obey. It emanated from the desires and organized efforts of women, and then underwent long discussion before acceptance.

B. **STUDENT ACTIVITY**

1. Have students list all points covered in the Code. Add items, if students feel important points are missing—for example, "How many students think men should have male maternity leave?"
2. Review why Cuban women insisted on each point in the Code. Imagine a situation in which an item in the Code is at issue (the context could be at home, at work, or at school). Discuss how the situation would be handled before the Code and after the Code.

3. Do we need a Family Code in this country? Are the same family situations and roles present here? Debate the issue.

4. Would the Cuban Family Code work here? Why or why not?

5. Given the fact that many women as well as men in the United States work, what changes would be helpful so that both can effectively do their work outside the home?

6. What amendment to the Constitution are some Americans trying to get passed to insure women's rights here? Do you think it is needed?

7. Write a scenario similar to the discussion between Elena and Ramon, in which American characters discuss rights and responsibilities within the home. Or write a scenario that takes place at school between students regarding their rights and responsibilities at school.

NOTE TO TEACHER

In their discussions about women and work in Cuba, students may feel that in Cuba women are forced to work and in the U.S. women have a choice. Actually, in Cuba women are not forced but are strongly encouraged to participate in the labor force. Only between 30% and 34% of women in Cuba work, while in the U.S. 42% of the labor force are women.

Ask the class if women really have the choice to work or not to work here. How many men have a choice?

Most women in the U.S. work because they have to. Most of the girls in your class will work at some point in their lives. Women work for significantly lower pay than men, primarily because they are in lower paying "female" type jobs.

The following information about women and work in the United States could be presented to students as a worksheet.

HOW MANY WOMEN WORK?

- By mid-1977, 40 million women were in the labor force. This is about 41% of the country's workers. This figure is rising. Women now comprise 42% of the work force.

- Nine out of ten women will work at some time in their lives.

- More than half of all women between eighteen and sixty-four years of age are workers.

- In 1976, 6.1 million working mothers had children under six years of age.

HOW MUCH DO WOMEN EARN?

- In 1975 the earning difference between men and women was:

1975	
MEN	*$13,216* white males
	$10,168 minority males (*includes all races other than white*)
WOMEN	$ 7,614 white females
	$ 7,505 minority females

In 1976, the median wage for women was 40% less than the median wage for men. This gap between women's pay and men's pay is not diminishing. Women are concentrated in low-paying jobs. For example, an auto mechanic may make $6.15 an hour, and a textile worker only $2.61 an hour. An electrician may earn $8.19 an hour; a practical nurse may earn only $3.00 an hour.

- 80% of American women work in light industry, clerical and service jobs.

WHY DO WOMEN WORK?

- Most women in the U.S. work because they need the money. Frequently a woman's salary will raise a family out of poverty.
- Most women work to support themselves in the U.S.:

  7 million are single women.

  6.7 million have husbands who earned less than $7,000 per year.

  6.3 million are widowed, divorced and or separated.

  1 million have husbands not working.

  500,000 have unemployed husbands.

- One out of every eight families is headed by a woman who is the only support of that family.

Sources: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1975. U.S. Dept. of Labor, Employment Standards, Women's Bureau, 1976. *Women's Almanac*, J.P. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1976. P. 273. *U.S. Working Women: A Datebook*, U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin, 1977.

ORAL HISTORY
Student Interviews

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The students have looked at women involved in major change (the Family Code in Cuba), but also have seen how even a small change on a personal level may affect a person's own life as well as the lives of people around them ("The Revolt of Mother," Misu's decision to run away from her in-laws.) The reality is that most women have been involved in some change, whether personal, social or political.

In the Oral History exercise, students will have the opportunity to apply what they have learned by conducting an interview of a woman they know. In these interviews they will look for evidence of common conditions between the women interviewed and the women they know through the readings. They will look for and analyze the changes in the personal lives of American women. They will learn about the variety of ways women have been involved in struggles for change, and the effect of the women's movement on the lives of American women.

Be sure to allow at least one week for students to complete their interviews.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE preceding interviews

1. Use the information above to introduce this activity to students.

2. Discuss with students the oral interview process. Review with them the oral interview directions.

3. With the class, carefully go over the interview questions. Make additions to the interview sheet if students have suggestions for additional questions.

4. If possible, have students tape their interviews. If tape recorders are used, however, the consent of the interviewee is imperative.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE following interviews

After the interviews are completed, have students share the information they have obtained. The following chart and discussion questions are designed to facilitate this discussion.

A. On the board, copy the following chart:

	Number of Women	Reasons for Change
Moved		
Expected to continue schooling		
Expected to work		
Expected marriage		
Expected children		

B. Ask students to respond to the following questions and to use the chart on the board to write in their answers.

1. How many women have moved since they were teenagers? If they have moved, what reasons did they give for this move? Put checks next to the reasons which are repeated.
2. How many women expected to continue their schooling? How many did? If there were changes in their expectations, what were the reasons given?
3. How many women expected to work? How many did? If there were reasons why the interviewee did or did not work, what were they?
4. How many women expected to get married? If there were changes in these expectations, what caused them?
5. How many women expected to have children? If there were changes in these expectations, what caused them?
6. Looking at the chart, are there any patterns to the responses of the interviewees? Any similarities? What differences?

C. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. On the board make a list of the major turning points the interviewees saw in their lives. Are there patterns?
2. Make a list of the *causes* for the major turning points in the interviewees' lives. Have the class look for patterns. Which causes for change seem to be beyond the women's control? Which seem to come from their own personal decisions?
3. List the things women want to change in their lives.
4. List on the board the kinds of change activities in which the women interviewed have been involved.
5. Have the class give examples of the ways the women's movement has changed women's lives. There should be negative as well as positive responses.

D. Refer to this list begun in the Personal Change unit, *Conditions Women Want to Change*. Review items on the list and make additions on the basis of information students collected in the interviews.

E. SHORT ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

Ask students to write about their interviewing experiences.

1. **What was one thing you liked about this interview?**
2. **What was one thing you disliked about this interview?**
3. **Write one thing you learned about the woman you interviewed that you did not know before.**
4. **Did any of your ideas about the woman you interviewed change as a result of the interview? If so, which ideas?**

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The activities in this final section are designed to enable students to summarize and reinforce what they have learned about women's push for change. Furthermore, these activities provide an opportunity to place the people of the readings—Shanti, Misu, Cuban women, and Sara Penn (Mother)—within the context of an international women's movement. The teacher should begin with Activity One and then select between Activities Two and Three to conclude the unit.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Activity One: The International Women's Movement

1. Use the information above to introduce the set of readings on the international aspect of the women's movement.
2. Read "The International Women's Movement" aloud in class.
3. As a class, discuss the questions attached to the reading.
4. Read "The History of International Women's Day" aloud in class.
5. As a class, discuss the questions attached to the reading.

Activity Two: Poster Making

1. Introduce the activity by asking students to recall political slogans, bumper stickers, buttons and posters seen recently around town.
2. Write the slogans on the board and discuss what actions the slogans are advocating or protesting and who might have written the slogans.
3. Determine whether the slogans are effective, and what the ingredients are for an effective slogan.
4. Assign students to design their own posters, working alone or in pairs. The posters can be designs for logos, slogans, a collage of American women, or a collage of women around the world; or the poster can represent an idea in one of the stories in the unit.
5. Conclude this activity by having students share their work with the class. Discuss the posters for content and effectiveness. Discuss how Misu, Mother, the women of Cuba, and Shanti would respond to the posters. Which of the posters would be most useful to their causes?

Activity Three: Research Project

1. Assign students to conduct a research project on women's push for change in another country. The reports could focus on the work of a specific person, or the women's movement in that country. Suggestions are:

   Portugal: "The Three Marias" (Maria Barreno, Maria Horta, Maria Velho de Costa)

   Ireland: Mairead Corrigan, Betty Williams

   France: Simone de Beauvoir

   Greece: Melina Mercouri

   Argentina: Victoria Ocampo

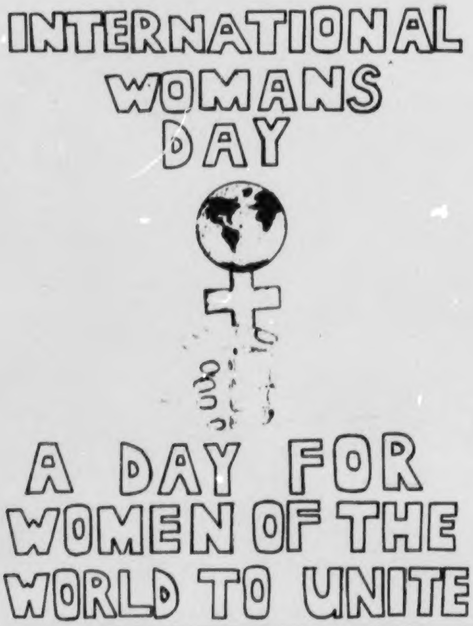
   Israel: Golda Meir

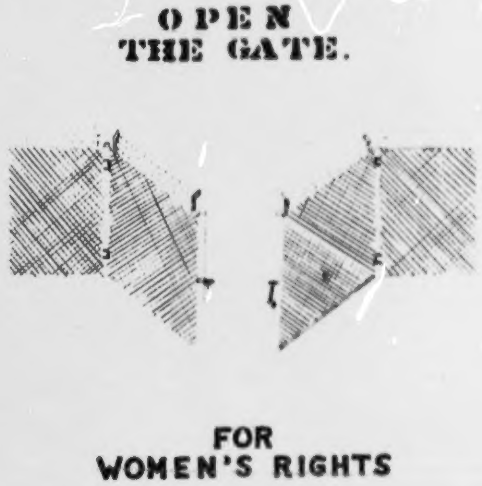
   Italy: Oriana Fallaci

   Nicaragua: Doris Tijerina

2. **Have students share their research projects with the class.**

3. **Complete this activity by adding to the list, *Conditions Women Want to Change*, begun with the reading "The Revolt of Mother." Have students review the items on the list. Determine those conditions for change in "greatest demand" by women around the world. Determine the conditions for change which seem to be important to very limited groups of women. Compare the conditions placed in these two categories and discuss the reasons for the limited or widespread nature of the "conditions women want to change."**





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Books and Guides

African-American Institute. *Africa in U.S. Education Materials*. New York: African-American Institute, School Services Division. $3.00. Order from publisher, 833 U.N. Plaza, N.Y. 10017.

This is a guide for seeking materials about Africa. It includes stories and curricula about women in Africa. For students. Easy.

Clark, Leon, ed. *Through African Eyes: Cultures in Change*. New York: Praeger, 1971. Six volumes.

For this unit use the volumes *From Tribe to Town: Problems of Adjustment* and *The Rise of Nationalism: Freedom Regained.* Excellent introductory statements and discussion questions. For students. Easy.

Katz, Naomi and Milton, eds. *Fragment from a Lost Diary and Other Stories: Women of Asia, Africa and Latin America*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1975.

This is an anthology of Third World literature about women. Appropriate from Africa are Abioseh, "The Truly Married Women," Mbilinyi, "A Woman's Life," Rive, "Resurrection," and Alex La Cuona, "Coffee for the Road."

Marvin, Stephen. *World Study Inquiry Series: Africa*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969. Includes Teacher's Manual.

This series is a good introduction to change in Africa. Useful are short stories "Stupid Girl" and "Women's Changing Roles." Discussion questions. For students. Easy.

Films

Fear Women. 1971. Elspeth MacDougall. Color, 28 minutes. Contemporary/McGraw-Hill, 330 West 42nd Street, New York 10036.

Malawi: The Women. 1971. Churchill Films. Color, 15 minutes. 662 N. Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90069.

Both films show women in different stages of the transition from rural to industrial society. The women explain their lives, their work. Good images, although the dialogue is sometimes difficult to understand.

Magazines

Africa Women. Order from 54 West 82nd Street, New York 10024.

Articles about outstanding women, special concerns of women, and fashion. Good pictures.

SOUTH AFRICA

Books

Bernstein, Hilda. *For Their Triumphs and for Their Tears: Women in Apartheid South Africa*. International Defense and Aid Fund, 104 Newgate St., London, EC1, August 1975.

A concise description of apartheid and its effect on women, and the background of the resistance of women through the defiance campaign until now. For teachers.

Ntantala, Phyllis. *An African Tragedy: The Black Women under Apartheid*. Detroit, Mich.: Agascha Productions, 1976.

Includes firsthand accounts of the "tragedy of broken families and the traumas suffered by black women due to such insane regulations as the infamous pass laws." Beautifully written. Advanced students and teachers.

CHINA

Books and Articles

Belden, Jack. *China Shakes the World*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970.

A journalist's firsthand account of the Chinese civil war from 1946 to 1949. Good chapters on women and revolution. "Misu, the Guerilla Girl" is here, as is "Gold Flower's Story," an excellent story for advanced readers. "Gold Flower" is also available in separate print. For teachers.

Curtin, Katie. *Women in China*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1975.

A young Canadian feminist examines women's position in traditional and revolutionary China. For teachers.

Gordon, Linda. *The Fourth Mountain: Women in China*. Somerville, Mass.: New England Free Press, 1973.

Description of the changes for women in China and the differences between women's liberation there and in the United States. For teachers.

New Women in New China. Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972.

These are short personal statements and articles which can be read by students as well as teachers. Eight pages of photography. For students.

Smedley, Agnes. *Portraits of Chinese Women in Revolution*. Old Westbury, New York: The Feminist Press, 1976.

This is a collection of 12 journalistic portraits and 6 fictionalized sketches of Chinese women which document changes in their lives during the period of the Revolution. Photographs. For advanced students.

Film

Women in China. 1977. Betty McAfee. Color, 27 minutes. Open Window Films, 1226 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, California 94709.

This film about women in modern China captures the spirit of change as well as the remnants of tradition.

Magazine

China Reconstructs. Monthly. Order from China Books and Periodicals.

Shows many large, bright pictures of modern life in China. Women depicted in many roles. Available at stores that carry books from China.

CUBA

Books and Articles

Cuba Review, "Women in Transition," Vol. IV, no. 2, Sept. 1974. Box 206 Cathedral Station, New York 10025.

These are important articles, songs, and biographies about women in Cuba and the issues and organizations that touch their lives. For teachers.

Ortiz, Victoria, *The Land and the People of Cuba*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1973.

The history of Cuba from the 15th century until today. Of particular interest is the chapter "Cubanas, Past and Present." For students and teachers. Easy.

Randall, Margaret, *Cuban Women Now*. Toronto: The Women's Press, 1974.

A series of candid interviews with Cuban women who reveal the extent of their liberation after the Revolution and the work yet to be done. An important work. For students and teachers.

Randall, Margaret, *Cuban Women Now: Afterward 1974*. Toronto, Canada: The Women's Press, 1974.

Having completed the writing for *Cuban Women Now* in 1971, Ms. Randall felt that in the three years since, fundamental changes in the lives of women needed further documentation. She deals with women's work and the Family Code.

Ruis. *Cuba for Beginners*, New York: Pathfinder Press, Inc., 1970.

A book written and illustrated by caricaturist Ruis. It humorously shows the history of Cuba from its discovery by Columbus to its socialist Revolution. For students and teachers.

Wald, Karen. *Children of Che: Child Care and Education in Cuba*. Palo Alto, California, Ramparts Press, 1978.

An important book which combines information about education and child care in Cuba with interviews with the children themselves. It is also a book about the lives of women—their comments, feelings, and current position in Cuba. Readable. For teachers.

Films

Lucia, With Cuban Women, **and *Alicia* are three films about women put out by the Cuban Film Institute (ICAIC) and are available in the U.S.**

One Way or Another. Sara Gomez. ICAIC.

This film captures in an amusing way the conflicts between a man and a woman when the man has trouble shaking his macho attitudes and his male "code of honor."

Magazines

Mujeres. Bohemia.

Available in selected bookstores. These magazines present a broad range of activities and problems related to women in Cuba.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Giffin, Frederick, ed. *Woman as Revolutionary*. New York: A Mentor Book, New American Library, 1973.

This is an anthology of writings by and about women who have played important roles in progressive movements. They range from Christine de Pisan to Dolores Ibarruri to Joan Baez. A good resource for students to use for special reports. For students and teachers.

Iglitzin and Ross, eds. *Women in the World: Studies in Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Clio Books, 1976.

A collection of essays about the position of women in many part of the world. Of particular interest for this unit are the sections "Women in Developing Countries" and "Women in Nations Mobilized by Social Change." For teachers.

Intercom. "Men and Women: Changing Roles in a Changing World." Center for Global Perspectives, 218 E. 18th St., New York, April 1976.

This book has short stories, role-playing ideas and material on women around the world. Students will find information about traditional relationships, dilemmas of change, expectations, sources of change, and population and development. For students.

Rowbotham. Sheila, ***Women, Resistance and Revolution***. New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1974.

This book is a narrative history of women's attempts to radically change their position in society. Of particular interest for this unit are the overviews on women in Third World countries. For teachers.

Third World Forum, "Third World Women," Vol. II, no. 4, May-July 1976.

Interviews with women who examine the progress of the liberation of women in Palestine, Cuba, Oman, Guinea-Bissau, Pakistan, Iran and the Philippines. For teachers and students.

UNESCO Courier (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), "Turning Point for Women," August-September 1975.

Short descriptions of women's lives in different countries. Good illustrations. For students.

UNESCO Features, "International Women's Year," November 1975. Issue 676/677/678.

A collection of interesting interviews and articles with women in different countries. For students.

UNICEF News (United Nation Children's Fund), Issue 82/1974/4.

Issue is devoted to an investigation of the conditions and problems of women. Good short stories; excellent photographs. For students.

Women: A Journal of Liberation, "International Women," Vol. 3, no. 4, 1974.

Good articles on women in Cuba and China as well as pieces on women from other countries and cultures. Excellent photographs. For students.

UNIT 3

Women in Change: Twentieth Century Women in Transition

WOMEN IN CHANGE
was developed by the following team of people:

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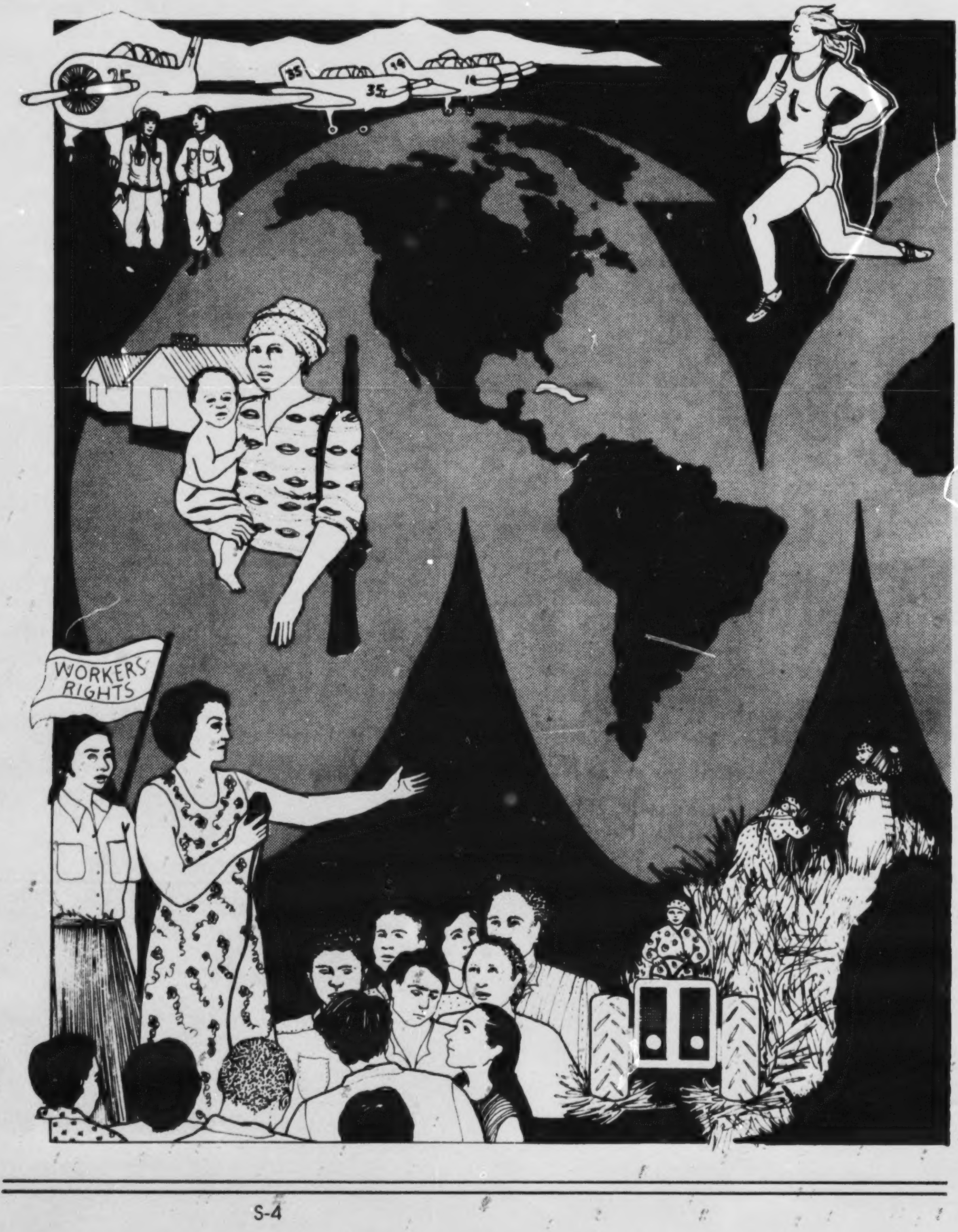
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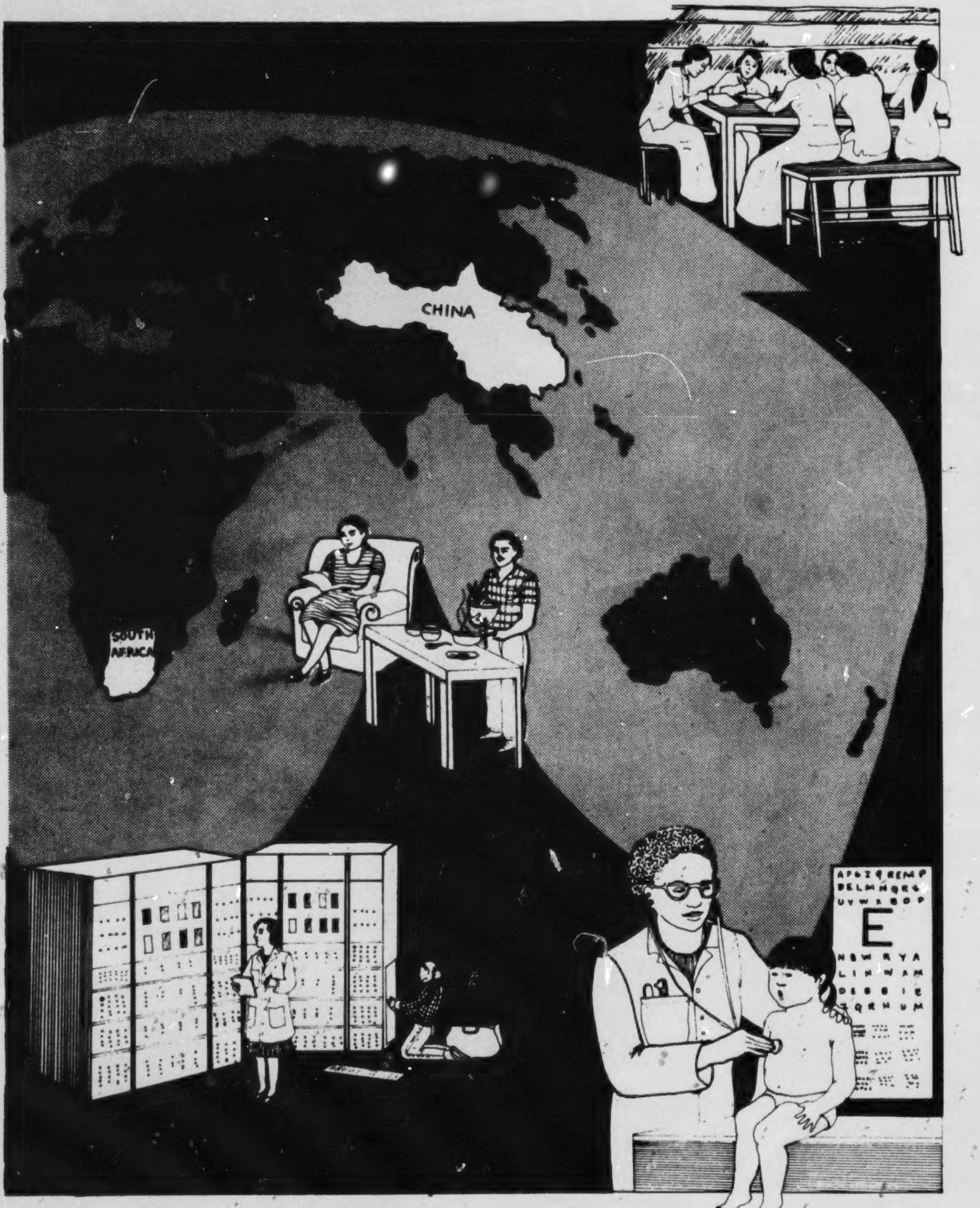
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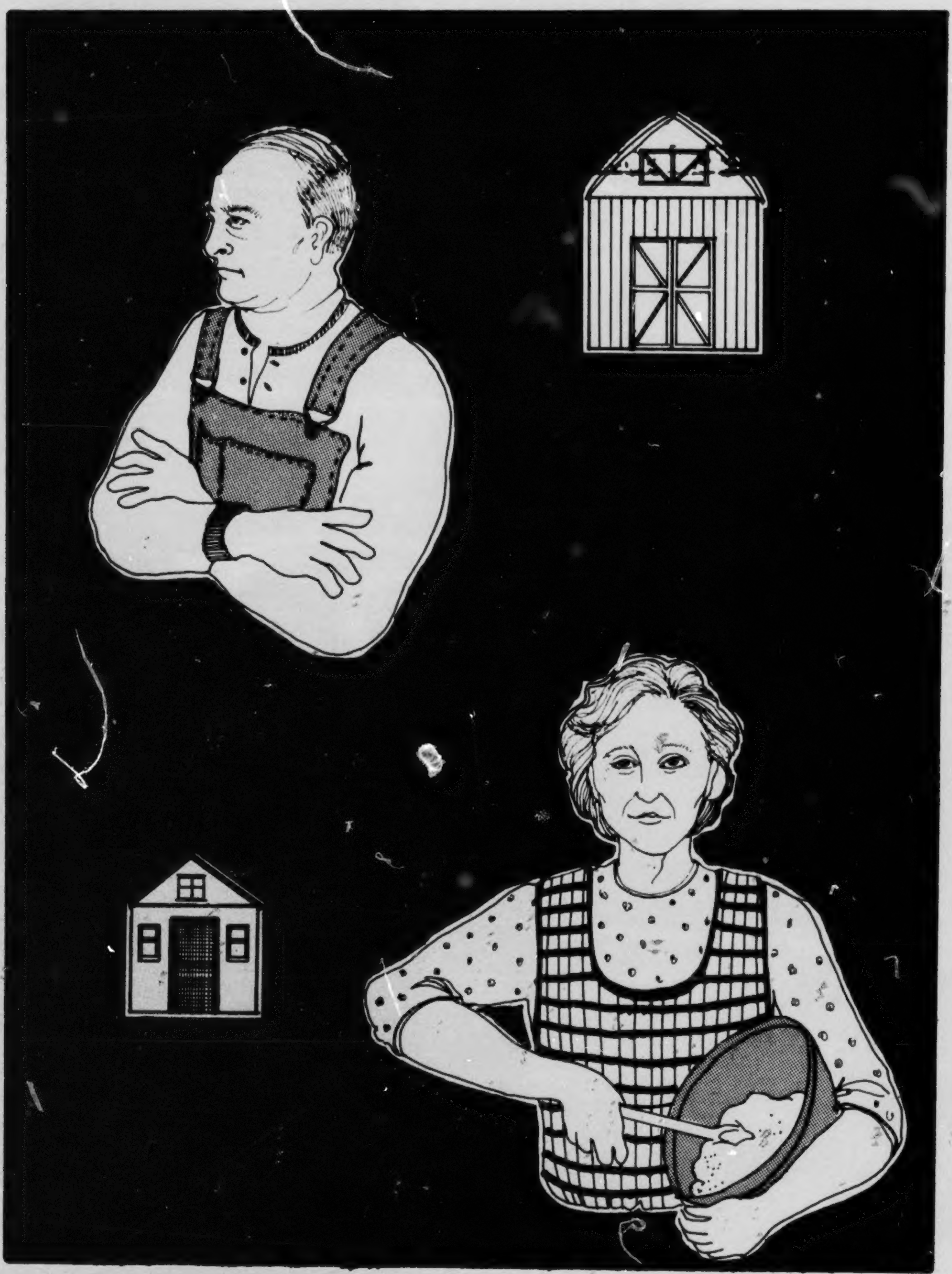

THE REVOLT OF MOTHER

INTRODUCTION

This story describes the relationships between members of a traditional patriarchal family. It is a farm family which, although early twentieth century American, represents small farm families in many parts of the world.

The farm is a working unit where every family member has an important, productive role. Within this unit the women assume responsibilities for some tasks and the men for others.

In this story the woman comes to challenge one of her husband's major responsibilities—the decision about what should be built on the farm.

In the past, in many cultures women were given an important and often valued role to play within their families. Often, however, the kinds of decisions men could make gave them more power. Women were excluded from decisions about the nature of the family's economic base, the use of the family's money, the use of her time, her relationships beyond her family, the tasks she did, where the family should live, and the number of children she should have.

In "The Revolt of Mother," the woman's decision to override her husband's authority and his acquiesence give her more control over her life. It also shows her son and daughter, and possibly some women in the community, new potentials for the roles of women within the family.

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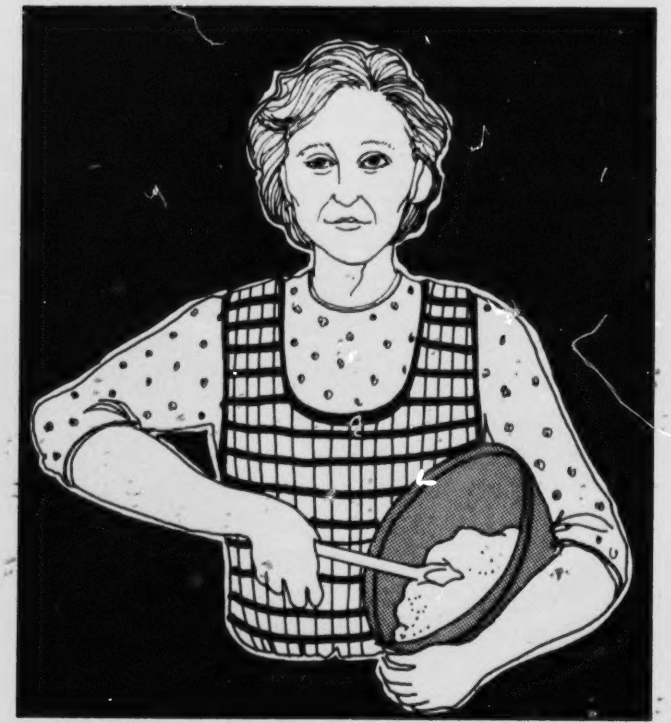

THE REVOLT OF MOTHER*

"Father!"

"What is it?"

"I want to know what them men are diggin' over in the field for."

"I wish you'd go into the house, Mother, an' 'tend to your own affairs," the old man said.

"I ain't goin' into the house until you tell me what them men are doin' over there in the field," said she.

The old man looked as immovable as one of the rocks in his pasture-land. He finished saddling the horse and started out of the barn.

"FATHER!" said she.

"They're diggin' a cellar, I su'pose, if you've got to know."

"A cellar for what?"

"A barn."

"A barn? You ain't goin' to build a barn over there where we was goin' to have a house, father?"

The old man turned and rode out of the barn, not saying a word.

The woman watched him a moment and then went out of the barn across the yard to the house. It was a tiny little box-like house, the smallest building compared to the barn and to all the other sheds and out-buildings.

After the noon meal, and the children had left, Sarah spoke with a look of quiet determination on her face.

"Father, I've got somethin' I want to say to you. I want to know what you're building that barn for."

"I got nothin' to say," said her husband.

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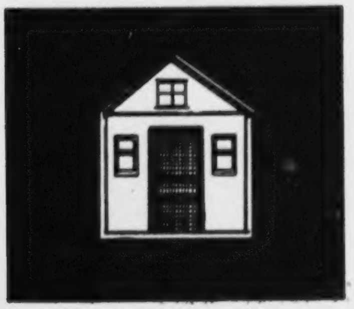
*Adapted from the short story "The Revolt of Mother," by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman.

"I'm goin' to talk real plain to you; I never have since I married you, but I'm goin' to now. You see this room, Father; it's all the one I've had to work in an' eat in and sit in since we was married. What would you have thought, Father, if we had had our weddin' in a room no better than this? An' this is all the room my daughter will have to be married in."



"Look here, Father."

Sarah Penn went across the room as though it were a stage. She flung open a door to point out their tiny bedroom, only large enough for a bed and bureau, with a path between.

She stepped to another door and opened it to show a tiny closet. "Here is all the pantry I've got— Father, I've been takin' care of the milk of six cows in this place, an' now you're goin' to build a new barn, an' keep more cows, an' give me more to do in it."

She threw open another door. A narrow, crooked flight of stairs wound upward to two unfinished chambers where their son and daughter had slept all their lives. "There ain't nothin' so good in this house as your horse's stall; it ain't so warm an' tight."

Sarah Penn stood before her husband. "Now, Father, I want to know if you think you're doin' right. When we was married, twenty-five year ago, you promised me faithful that we should have a new house built in that lot over in the field before the year was out. You said you had the money. You've been making more money, an' I've been savin' it for you ever since, an' you ain't built no house yet. You've built sheds an' cow-houses an' one new barn, an' now you're goin' to build another. You're lodgin' your dumb beasts better than you are your own flesh an' blood. I want to know if you think it's right."

"I ain't got nothin' to say. I've got to go off after that load of gravel. I can't stand here talkin' all day."

"Father, won't you think it over, an' have a house built there instead of a barn?"

Mr. Penn left the house, saying again, "I ain't got nothin' to say."

Daughter, Nanny, age 19, spoke as she entered the kitchen. "What are they diggin' for, Mother?"

"A cellar for a new barn."

"Oh, Mother, he ain't going to build another barn?"

"That's what he says."

A boy came in and stood before the kitchen glass, combing his hair slowly. He did not seem to pay any attention to the conversation.

"Sammy, did you know Father was going to build a new barn?" asked the girl.

He turned, and showed a face like his father's under his smooth crest of hair, "Yes, I s'pose I did."

"How long have you known it?" asked his mother.

"'Bout three months, I guess."

Sarah thought, he's just like his father. Never tells me a thing! It's like the men don't feel women should have any say.

Nanny looked at Sarah. "Mother, don't you think it's too bad Father's going to build that new barn, much as we need a decent house to live in?"

"You ain't found out yet we're women-folk, Nanny Penn. You ain't seen enough of men folks yet. One of these days you'll know that we know only what men folks think we should."

Nanny started sewing. Suddenly she looked up, and the tender red flamed all over her face and neck, "Mother, I've been thinking—I don't see how we're goin' to have any—wedding in this room. I'd be ashamed to have his folks come even if we didn't have anybody else."

"We ought to have the wedding in the new barn," said Nanny. Mrs. Penn stared at her with a curious expression. "Why, Mother, what makes you look so?" "Nothin," said she, turning away.

All through the Spring, there was great activity around the building of the barn. It was a magnificant building for such a little town. People came after Church on Sundays to see the progress of the work. The week the barn was to be finished, however, Mr. Penn received a letter from his brother-in-law telling him of a fine horse for sale. He decided to go away for three or four days and look at the horse.

Sarah helped her husband get ready for the trip. As he left, he said, "If them cows come today, Sammy can drive 'em into the new barn, an' when they bring the hay up, they can pitch it in there."

Sarah said, "Well," and began her baking.

By eleven o'clock she finished the pies just as the load of hay from the west field came slowly down the cart track and drew up at the new barn. Mrs. Penn ran out. "Stop!" she shouted—"stop!"

The men stopped and looked. "Why, he said to put it in here," said one of them.

"Don't you put the hay in the new barn; there's room enough in the old one, ain't there?" said Mrs. Penn.

"Room enough," returned the hired man. "didn't need the new barn, nohow, far as room's concerned."

Nanny and Sammy stared at each other. There was something strange about their mother's manner.

"What you goin' to do, Mother?" asked Nanny timidly.

"You'll see what I'm goin' to do," replied Mrs. Penn. "If you're through, Nanny, I want you to go upstairs an' pack up your things; an' I want you, Sammy, to help me take down the bed in the bedroom."

"Oh, Mother, what for?" gasped Nanny.

"You'll see."

During the next few hours Sarah Penn accomplished a major feat. She moved all their little household goods into the new barn while her husband was away. Nanny and Sammy followed their mother's instructions without a murmur; indeed, they were overawed. At five o'clock in the afternoon the little house in which the Penns had lived for twenty-five years had emptied itself into the new barn.

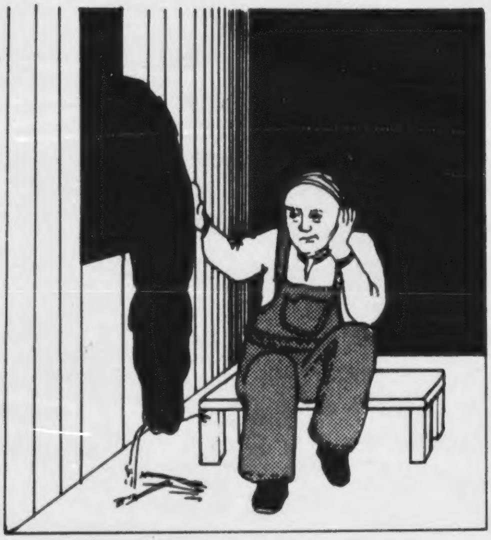
Sarah Penn had seen at a glance the possibilities for human comfort in the new barn. The great boxstalls, with quilts hung before them, would make better bedrooms than the one she had occupied for twenty-five years. The harness room, with its chimney and shelves, would make a kitchen of her dreams. The great middle space would make a fine parlor, fit for a palace. Upstairs there was as much room as down. With partitions and windows, what a house it would be!

When the four new cows arrived, Sarah ordered three to be put in the old barn, the other in the house shed where the cooking stove had stood. The hired man bringing the milk (at Sarah's orders) to the new barn instead of to the old house was astonished. Quickly, he spread the story all over the town. People came out just to see if it was really true that the cows were being put in the old house. Some thought Mrs. Penn had gone mad. But some of the town women stopped by to see how Sarah had fixed the place up. Most went home smiling, although never in living memory had a woman defied her husband like this. Everyone wondered how Mr. Penn would react when he came home.

On Saturday, when Mr. Penn was expected home, there was a group of men standing in the road near the new barn. The hired man had finished milking, but he hung around. Sarah Penn had a supper of brown-bread, baked beans and a custard pie all ready. It was the supper Father loved on a Saturday night.

Nanny and Sammy couldn't take their eyes off their mother. She moved about with a new confidence which amazed and delighted them. Sammy looked out of the harness room window. "There he is," he announced in a whisper. Mrs. Penn kept on about her work.

The children watched while Mr. Penn tried to get in the front door of the old house. It was locked, so he went around to the shed. Nanny giggled when she thought of her father opening the shed door and seeing the cow instead of the cooking stove. Mr. Penn came out, looking about him in a dazed way. He took the new horse by the bridle and led it to the new barn. Nanny and Sammy slunk close to their mother. The barn doors rolled back, and there stood Mr. Penn, with the long face of the farm horse looking over his shoulder.



Nanny kept behind her mother, but Sammy stepped forward suddenly, and stood in front of her.

Mr. Penn stared at the group. "What on earth you all down here for?" said he. "What's the matter over to the house?"

"We've come here to live, Father," said Sammy, bravely.

The father stood speechless.

"What—" Mr. Penn said, sniffing the air—"What is it smells like cookin'?"

"You come in here, Father," said Sarah. She led the way into the harness room and shut the door. "Now Father," said she, "you needn't be scared. I ain't crazy. There ain't nothin' to be upset over. But we've come here to live, an' we're goin' to live here. We've got just as good a right here as new horses an' cows. The house wasn't fit for us to live in any longer, an' I made up my mind I wasn't goin' to stay there. I've done my duty by you twenty-five years, an' I'm goin' to do it now; but I'm goin' to live here. You've got to put in some windows and partitions; an' you'll have to buy some furniture."

"Why, Mother!" the old man gasped.

"You'd better take your coat off an' get washed—there's the wash-basin—an' then we'll have supper."

"Why, Mother!"

Without asking his father, Sammy led the new horse to the old barn. The old man saw him, and shook his head speechlessly. His wife helped him take off his coat; his arms seemed to lack the power. She smoothed his thin gray hair after he had washed. Then she put the supper on the table and the family drew up. Mr. Penn sat looking dazedly at his plate.

"Ain't you goin' to ask the blessin', Father?" asked Sarah.

And the old man bent his head and mumbled.

After supper, Mr. Penn went out and sat down on the step of the new barn. He looked out over the farm's fields. His eyes were thoughtful.

After the dishes were cleared away, Sarah went out to him. She bent over and nervously touched her husband on one of his thin shoulders. "Father!"

The old man's eyes first looked steadily into hers, then glanced in the direction of Sammy, who was happily sweeping the floor of their new "home."

"I'll put up the partitions, an' — everything you — want, Mother. I should be angry at Sammy for not standin' in for me whilst I was gone. But he seems to like what you did. I hadn't no idea you was so set on it as all this."

Sarah smiled. Her sudden change had broken his reserve and she had reached him at last.

THE REVOLT OF MOTHER

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. In the story, what tasks did the men do? What tasks did the women do?

2. What were Father's main concerns? Mother's main concerns?

3. **Before her "revolt," what decisions could Mother make? Father? Whose responsibilities do you consider to be more important?**

4. If Mother went to a public meeting about changing the conditions for women, what kinds of things would she talk about? List these issues below:

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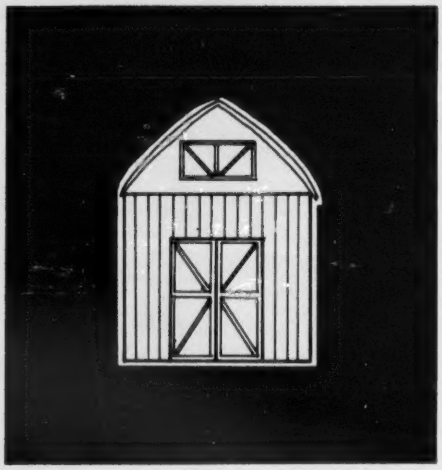


POLITICAL CHANGE THIRD WORLD WOMEN

In the past the fact that women were allowed to do only certain tasks and were limited in the kinds of decisions they could make created barriers to their full participation in their society. In "The Revolt of Mother," Mother's decision to assume the responsibility for where the family would live gave her more control over her life. It also changed her relationship with her family and gave them a new vision of how women could act within their family.

In this section we will see women's struggles to gain more control over their lives in spheres beyond their families. You will read stories about real women who helped to organize and fight against political systems that kept them down. These women were changers who wished to create a new political and social system where their concerns would be regarded as important and necessary.

STRUGGLE FOR CHANGE IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

In these stories women are struggling for political change in Third World countries. These are countries which have been poor. Most have been controlled by foreign powers. In others, the masses of people have been dominated by a wealthy upper class or a racist government. Women in these countries feel that women's rights are not a separate issue from the problems of inequalities in all of their society. Therefore, at the time of these stories, some women in each country had made a decision to change the structures that oppressed everyone. They lived in times when the old ways were being challenged and when change was happening quickly. There were chances for men and women to escape from the way things had always been. They became aware of the possibilities of a new life and were excited about the chance to be part of change.

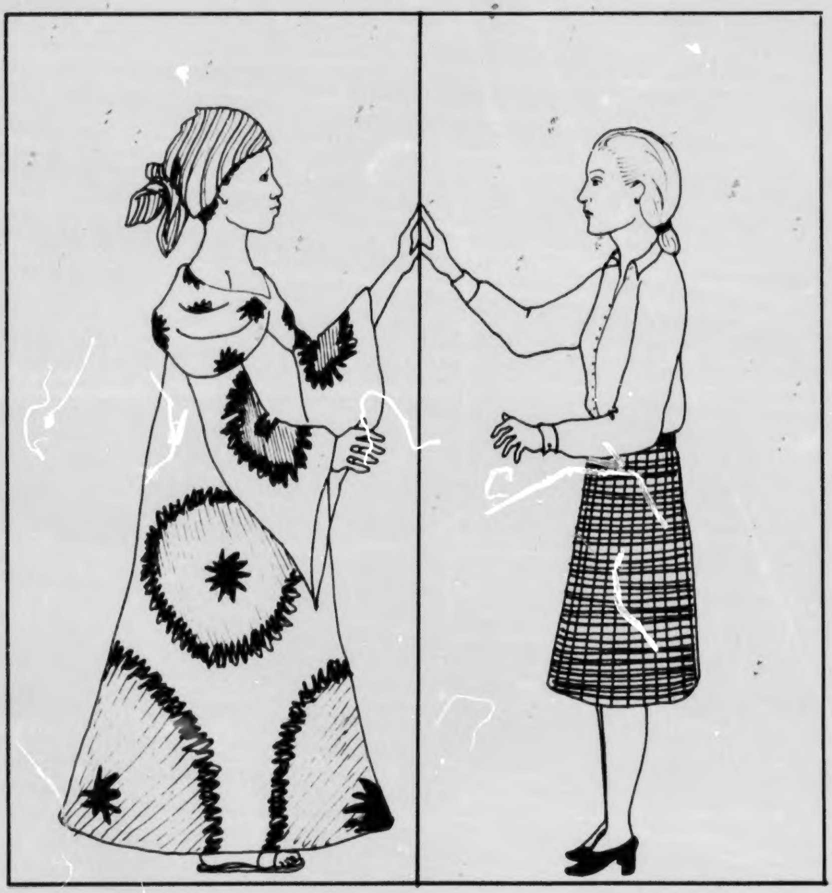
PERSONAL LIVES ARE CHANGED

Women who participated in the political struggles found that their personal lives also changed. As they learned new skills and became more aware of the things they could do, their relationships with people around them often became unsettled. Sometimes they met real resistance. People were comfortable relating to women as they had been. They were afraid that if women changed, a woman's family might fall apart or that women's morals might weaken.

Neither of these things happened. Usually, however, people had to make some adjustments which would allow women to participate politically.

WOMEN ORGANIZE TO WORK TOGETHER

One important way women participated in political struggle was that women gave each other strength through collective organizing (working together). As individuals speaking out they might have been ignored or cast out of their society. But working as a unit, women could speak with a powerful voice. Also, they could help each other develop the new skills they needed for the new tasks they were undertaking.



THE DEFIANCE OF WOMEN: SOUTH AFRICA

Now that you have touched the
women you have struck a rock,
you have dislodged a boulder,
you will be crushed
Women's Freedom Song, August, 1956

INTRODUCTION

South Africa is a country where the ruling whites, a minority and newcomers to South Africa, control all aspects of society. It is a country where even though blacks greatly outnumber whites, the ruling white government keeps itself in power through the use of modern weapons, police terror, imprisonment and torture. White South Africans are only 17.5% of the total population.

Blacks, the original inhabitants of South Africa, have very few rights. They cannot elect people to represent them and political organizations are limited. They are denied the housing, skilled jobs, health care and kind of education necessary for a decent life. For many years, the black South Africans have been used by the whites as a cheap source of labor. They have no real say over what jobs they might have or over the condition of their work. In this way whites keep themselves in positions of leadership at work and have a much higher standard of living than do black Africans. Even the poorest white family has at least one black servant or maid.

THE PASS SYSTEM

To maintain the oppression of the blacks, the white government created an extensive system of laws which keeps blacks and whites apart as much as possible. This is called "apartheid."

Blacks are forced to live in areas called "homelands," separate and apart from the whites. There is a pass system whereby all black Africans over sixteen must carry an identity "passbook" which shows where they live and work. In this way, the government regulates the number of blacks in the white areas. Certain blacks are allowed in to work, but must leave at night and return to the all-black communities, or must live in all-male dormitories near their work. Most black women are not allowed to work outside of their homelands. They cannot leave this area to find work to support their families, as they once did through trading, before the whites came.

In the homelands, the land is poor and the women scratch a living out of the brush and rock and try to raise a family. Disease and early death are common. Some women bury one baby after another and lastly bury the husband—a man, who, if away from the homelands for long stretches of time, was barely known to his family as a husband and father.

Women who are allowed to leave the homelands to work in white areas are offered only a few jobs. Often they are maids. They are poorly paid and sometimes made to live in rundown rooms. They are not allowed to have their family live with them. This prevents black Africans from living permanently and as families in the white communities, where housing, health care, education and services are vastly superior.

The passbook system also allows government officials to arrest blacks on the pretense that there is something wrong with their books. Arrests are frequent, and people who are arrested may be jailed or sent to work.

Until the mid-1950's, only men had to carry these "badges of slavery," as the passes are called. Then the government decreed that women, too, must carry them. The women at once responded by organizing a series of peaceful demonstrations against this new law. They were afraid that the government would use the passes to further separate them from their families, or arrest them, thereby leaving their children unprotected.

Throughout their history, many women in Africa have done things collectively. They farmed their fields, traded, and raised their children together. Politically they had a collective voice through their special all-women associations which had some power in their villages.

Although much of the power women once had is now lost in South Africa, they have repeatedly banded together to resist the racist control of the white government. The following story is an account of one time when they joined together to demonstrate against the newly created passbook laws for women.

*SHANTI'S STORY**

THE VILLAGE

August 1949: The villages were just beginning to stir in the pre-dawn light. Shanti woke with a start. The sound of heavy, running boots pounding the hard dirt between the huts shattered her dreams. Harsh male voices called out, "Where is your pass?"

Shanti heard her older brother's reply: "It's inside. Wait I'll get it."

Deep laughter followed this. "Don't bother. You are in violation of the law. Grab him!"

Scarcely breathing, Shanti peeked out through a chink in the mud wall. Helplessly, she watched as her brother was dragged off between two burly policemen.

For three months there was no news of him. When he returned he had a broken jaw and was sick and in rags. Taken before a court, he had been found guilty before he could plead his innocence. He was then handed over to the white farmers, whose trucks were waiting outside the courthouse, and forced to do farm work. Shanti was only nine, but she kept the memory of this pass raid in her heart.

THE WHITE AREA

August 9, 1956: Seven years later, almost to the day, Shanti again woke before the dawn had broken. Again she scarcely was breathing as she gathered her shawl over her shoulders and on bare feet crept out the door. Softly, softly she padded past the flowering shrubs and well-kept homes of the whites.

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*Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.

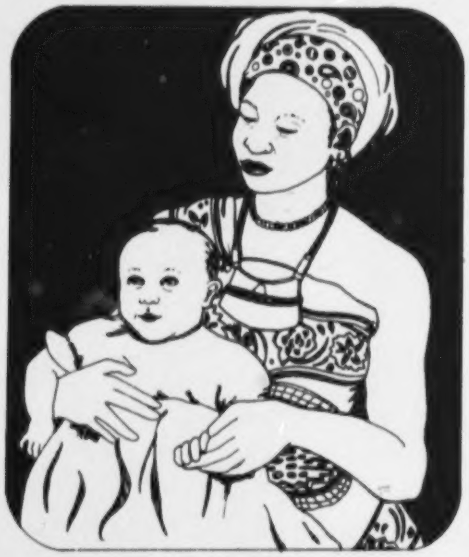
Nandi was already waiting for her on the corner. Laughing with relief, the two friends threw themselves into each other's arms. "Did you have trouble getting away?"

"No, but can you imagine the look on my mistress's face when she finds me gone and realizes that for today she will have to take care of her own child! Today we are on strike!"

Nandi answered, "And can *you* imagine the look on the Prime Minister's face when he sees how many of us there are to demonstrate against the passes!"

Shanti was still thinking of her job. "You know, I love the baby I take care of. He is round and plump and happy. But I often cry at night wondering if my *own* baby gets enough to eat. I haven't seen him for almost a year, ever since I came here to work and had to leave my baby behind. He should be walking now and perhaps saying a word or two. My mother looks after him, but she has her hands full. He's never seen a doctor."

Nandi looked thoughtful. "I suppose I'm better off than you. I do get to see my husband one day a week because he works for the Sanitation Department. But he must leave the city before



sundown or be arrested! Because of this he is often harsh with me. Maybe if things were better I would get more respect from him."

Nandi's statement made Shanti cry out, "These passes which keep us apart from our families are evil! This time the government has gone too far. Once we women could go anywhere we wanted. Now we are told where we can or cannot go. We might as well be in jail."

Just then, coughing and sputtering, an old truck wheeled down the lane toward them. It barely slowed down and the girls had to leap to join their friends on the back of the truck. As the truck rounded the final corner, leaving the comfortable homes of the whites behind, one of the girls called out to a sleepy house-boy who was sweeping the steps, "Tell our Madams we won't be at work today!"

The girls laughed gaily, and the truck headed off toward the capital, Pretoria.

THE DEMONSTRATION

On that day, Shanti and her friends joined masses and masses of women who had gathered in the capital from all over South Africa. They were there to demonstrate against the government's decision to force women, like men, to carry passes. Traveling by car, bus, train or foot the women had left their children home with the men and had come to the capital to pour into the streets to protest. Altogether there were 20,000 women in Pretoria.

Because marches were forbidden, the women walked in groups of never more than three. Their destination was the Union Building, where they wished to give their protest petitions to the Prime Minister.

Walking with her little group, Shanti told them why she had gotten involved. She told them of her brother's arrest years ago. She told them of her fears for her baby now. "If they arrest my mother, who would be left to take care of the baby?" She told them that she desperately feared the beatings and perhaps loss of her job when she returned to work today. But she had been very excited when a woman from her women's association had secretly told her about the demonstration. "Perhaps the best way to help my baby is to try to stop these new restrictions against women." She finally told her friends about a male friend who had laughed at the women's desire to fight. Shanti was angry. "He should wear skirts if he's going to let women fight alone against the government." But she liked him and was hurt when he said that he would stop seeing her if she got involved in the demonstrations.

Finally the Union Building was in sight. It was a beautiful building with pillared wings on either side. Trees, gardens and flowing lawns surrounded it. But, to Shanti, more beautiful was the slow stream of women who were now filling the lawns.

The colors were brilliant. There were the bright saris of the Indian women, the swirling robes of the African women, the colors of the women's associations. Some villages had their women wear identical robes or armbands.

When it seemed that everyone had settled, Lilian Ngoyi, one of the prime organizers, spoke to them:

> *The government can pass the most cruel and barbaric laws, but it will never stop the women in Africa in their forward march to freedom in our lifetime!*[1]

Lilian knocked on the Prime Minister's door. A nervous secretary opened the door a fraction—and reported that the Prime Minister was out. A number of women stepped forward and handed him bundle after bundle of protest forms. "You can go now," he almost pleaded. Then Lilian Ngoyi turned to the assembly. The women rose. They stood with their thumbs raised in the African salute for thirty minutes of silent protest. Even the

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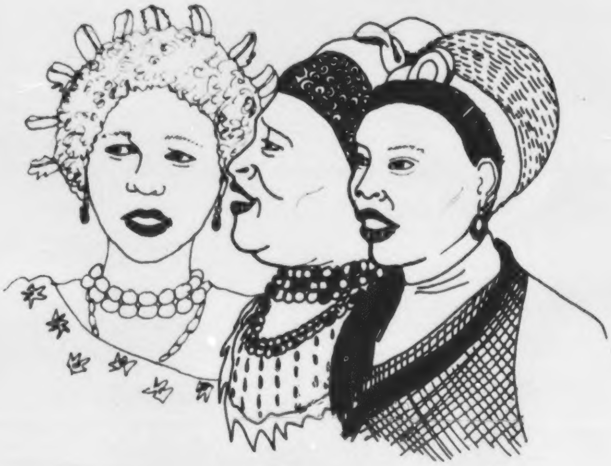
[1] "The Defiance by Women in South Africa," *The Africa Reader: Independent Africa,* Cartey and Kilson, eds., Vintage Books, N.Y., 1970, p. 312.



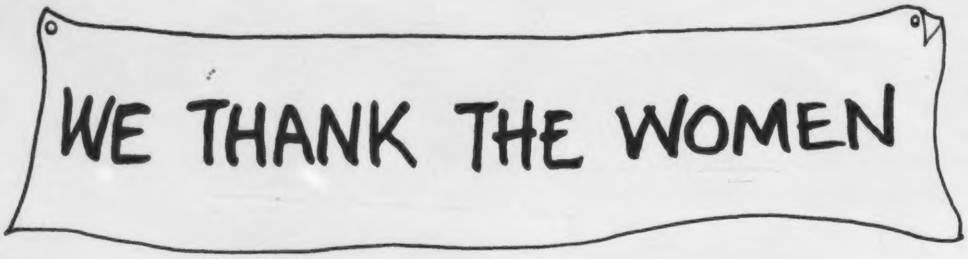
babies on their backs did not cry. Then they burst into song, the warrior song of the women—"you have struck a rock once you have touched a woman." The singing echoed over the city, touching everyone who heard it.

On the way back from the demonstration, Shanti and her friends were thrilled to see banners hung from the buildings—"WE THANK THE WOMEN." The men had hung up the signs and were supporting them! Shanti felt a surge of strength flow within her. Even if they were misused, abused and powerless, united with black men in the end they would win.

For Shanti, this demonstration was only the first step in her fight for her rights. Throughout the year women in all parts of South Africa demonstrated, rioted, and held assemblies to try to defeat this passbook law.

But this time, the government won. Old women attempting to collect their small pensions were told, "No passbook—no pension." Women could not keep their jobs without passes. In some areas, women without passes were beaten and their homes burned. In the end, the passbooks were accepted.

August 9, 1956, now called Women's Day, is remembered, however, by all black South Africans. Demonstrations like this one showed women that they could unite in great numbers to fight. It also showed everyone the risks women were willing to take to fight for their rights. Women are unshaken in their belief that some day they will win.



THE DEFIANCE OF WOMEN: SOUTH AFRICA

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Suppose you are a black man in South Africa. In what ways would you be restricted? How would you feel?
2. Suppose you are a black woman in South Africa. In what ways would you be restricted? How would you feel?
3. What kinds of work did black women do in South Africa?
4. List the things Shanti and Nandi could *not* do as maids living in the white areas.
5. Why was the extension of the passbook law an important issue to Shanti?
6. How did the women organize?
7. What risks did the women take in organizing?

MISU, THE GUERILLA GIRL*

OLD CHINA

A bride is like a pack horse. She is broken in at the beck and call of every one. When she arrives at her husband's home, she is made to crawl under a saddle to signify her complete submission to work like a beast of burden until her dying day.

Such is the stupidity of woman's character, she must distrust herself and obey her husband . . .

Old Chinese sayings

These old sayings show the position of women in old China. Old China was a partly feudal society, where a small ruling class of rich landlords owned most of the land and exploited most of the people in cooperation with foreign powers. The gap between the rich and the poor was very wide. It was a society where social status, age and sex determined how important you were within your family and within society as a whole. Thus, a young peasant girl was at the lowest rung of the ladder because of her age, her sex, and her lack of wealth.

In Old China poor families rejoiced in the birth of sons, but thought that girl babies were unlucky and a burden. Girls were an extra mouth to feed and good only for hard work. When they grew up they would be married at an early age and they would belong completely to their husband's family. If their poverty was great, peasant families sometimes killed girls at birth, and/or sold their girls and women in times of famine.

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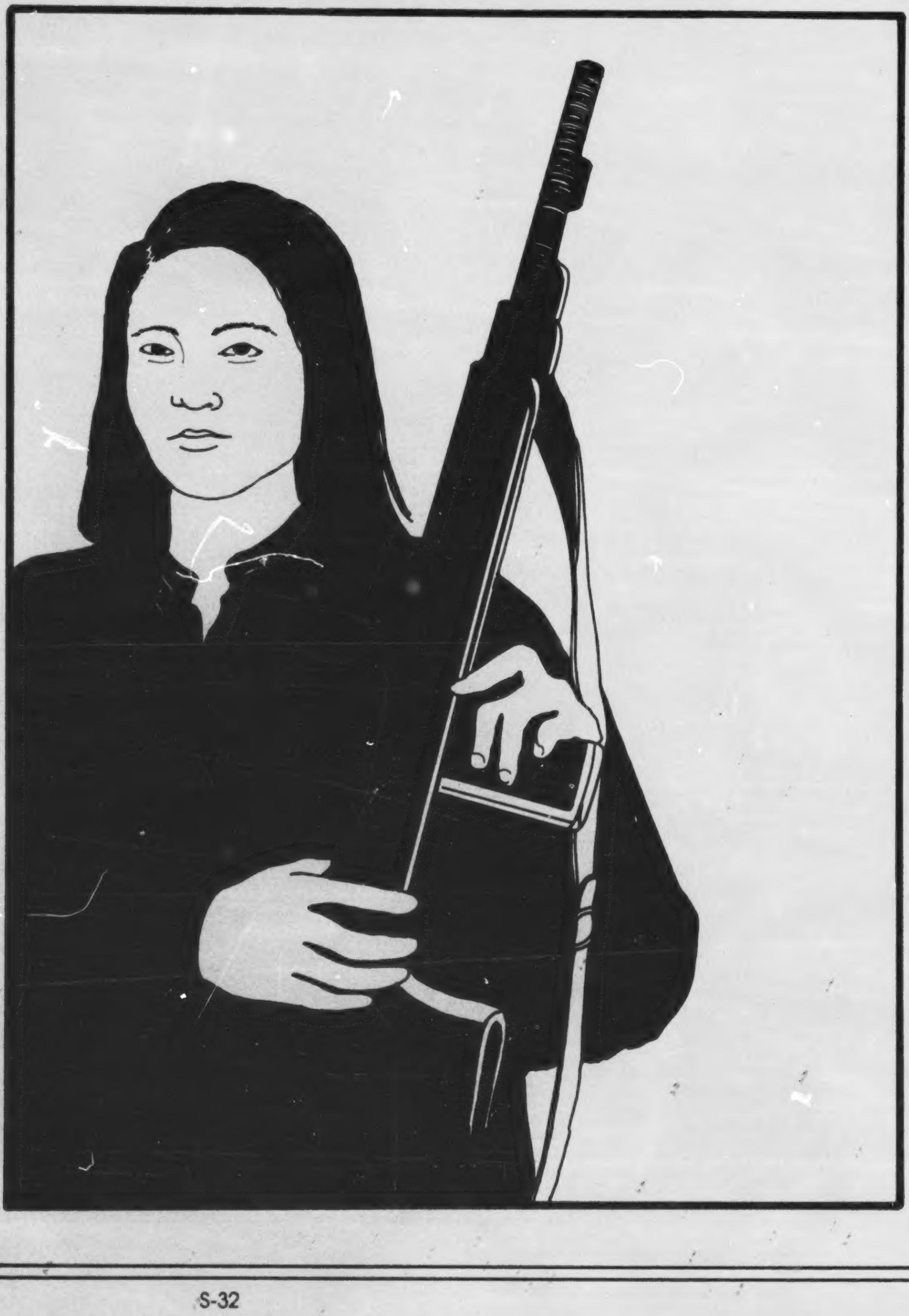
*Adapted from Jack Belden, *China Shakes The World*, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1970 (first published 1949), pp. 217-219.



Girls were married at a very young age, often to men who were 15 or 20 years older than they. After marriage, their ties with their families were almost completely cut. The woman belonged to the husband and his parents. Mistreatment of the wife by her husband and especially her mother-in-law was common. A man could take additional wives, or sell them off as he wished. A woman, even after her husband died, could not remarry. Divorce was unheard of.

Women were expected to stay at home and do all the work there. They rarely had opportunities to meet with other women.

THE REVOLUTION

Since those days, there has been a dramatic change in the position of women in China. Most of it occurred as a result of the Communist Revolution. With Mao Tse-Tung as their leader, the Communists came to power in 1949 and began a program of enormous social, economic and political change, including changes by and for women.

Before the Communists were victorious, there were many years of military struggle during which changes in the lives of women were already occurring. The following story, "Misu, the Guerilla Girl," is told by an American journalist who interviewed Misu in the 1940's. China in the 1940's had been conquered by the Japanese Army (World War II). When these invaders were expelled, civil war broke out between the Communist army (the 8th Route Army) and the army of the government then in power (the Nationalists). The Communists worked mainly in the countryside, mobilizing women and men to fight against the old order and build a new society. Misu was one of the young women who joined this movement. Mao Tse-Tung had said,

> When women all over the country rise up, that will be the day of victory for the Chinese revolution.

Now China continues to be committed to creating equality between men and women. The Chinese realize that in order for their new society to succeed, the position of women must be upgraded. Now women do everything from heavy construction work to brain surgery. One of their slogans is, "Women hold up half the sky."

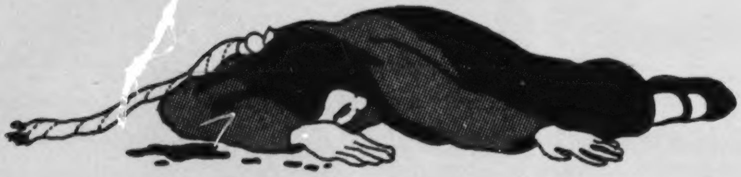
MISU, THE GUERILLA GIRL

She was quite husky, with stocky legs and heavy shoulders. Possibly nineteen. She had deep red cheeks and straight hair that fell to her shoulders.

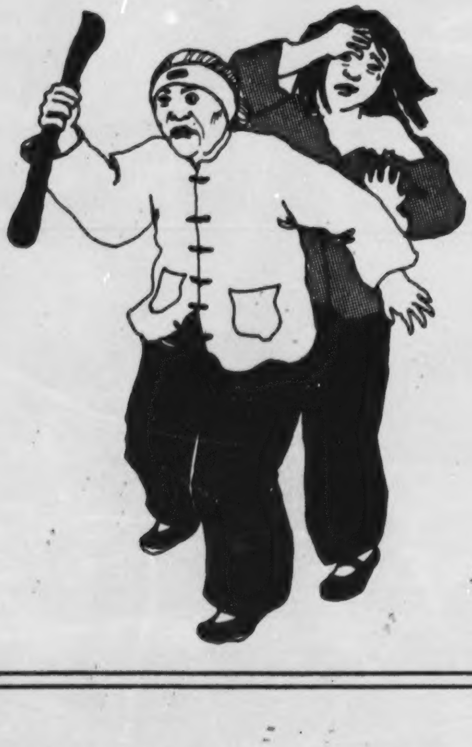
She wore a pair of torn grey cotton pants, stained with recent mud, and a dirty wine-colored jacket. She was the daughter of a peasant farmer who had gone blind when she was young. Two of her sisters had starved to death in a famine and she had stayed alive by living in the fields with her grandmother and by eating raw vegetables.

Her name was Misu and she lived in the village of Kwangtai. When she was fifteen or sixteen, she was married and went at once to her in-laws' house, becoming not so much a wife as a maidservant. She ate only what was left after the other members of the family had eaten. Whenever she had an argument with her husband, he told his mother and the two of them beat her on the back and on the breasts, all the while telling her that she was a most ungrateful girl.

Often Japanese officers came to visit her mother-in-law, who made Misu serve the officers tea and cakes. She rebelled against these duties, for the Japanese generally molested her. After one such refusal, she was beaten in a very brutal fashion. In despair, Misu locked herself in her room, tied a rope over a beam and hanged herself. She lost consciousness, but she woke up some hours later with the broken rope around her neck and her bed smeared with blood.



Afterward, she was sick and could not work well. She was beaten even more severely and deprived of almost all food. Fearing for her life, she ran home. Her mother and father-in-law followed and broke into her house. Her grandmother fought viciously to prevent her from being taken away, but she was beaten to the ground. Neighbors came to her rescue. From then on she lived at home with her grandmother. The two of them, as before, barely survived on vegetables they grew on their small plot of ground. From time to time, Misu's husband and mother-in-law caught her and beat her. She lived in constant fear of being kidnapped.



About this time, the Japanese retreated and the Communist 8th Route Army, which had occupied the hills around Kwangtai, entered the town.

One day a girl leader of this army came to Misu's home and said: "Your neighbors tell me you have suffered much. Now a new day has come for Chinese women and there is no longer any need for you to suffer."

Because no one had ever shown her any sympathy before, Misu was completely won over by this girl's kindness. She confided her hopes to her grandmother—her only friend. The old woman agreed it would be wonderful if women were the equal of men, but dashed cold water on Misu's hopes. "From ancient times till now," she said, "man has been the Heaven, woman the earth. What chance do we have?"

Misu told her grandmother's words to her new friend. "You must organize," said the girl. "If we form a women's association and everyone tells their bitterness in public, no one will dare to oppress you or any woman again."

Much moved, the girl threw herself wholeheartedly into the work of organizing the women on her street. Because of her zeal she was elected head of the women's association on her block.

Misu learned a great deal at the association's "Speak Bitterness" sessions. Here women told of their bad treatment by their husbands and in-laws. This helped everyone see that they all suffered equally. Through the association Misu found that she had a talent for speaking in public. Through the aid of the women in her group she succeeded in obtaining a divorce from her husband. Excitement spread through her—it *was* possible to change things!

About this time, the war between the Communists and the Nationalists began. Kawangtai organized its own militia. Misu used to sit by the militiamen and watch them clean their guns. Soon she was cleaning the gun of each armed man on her street. She wanted to become a soldier, but the men laughed at her and only let her cook and mend their clothes. As a joke, they taught her how to fire a rifle, but always without bullets. In the meantime, the Communist government in the area gave her food.

Still Misu was not satisfied. She trained herself for combat by shooting wild animals in the hills. Later, she overcame her fear of hand grenades by standing on rocky ledges and throwing them into the river far below. After that the farmers let her carry arms and go on raids.

Because she knew Kwangtai well, she soon planned most of the raids. On such raids, she generally acted as the lookout for the militiamen. Once, however, she climbed over the wall of Kwangtai and participated in a gunfight. On this occasion two of the enemy were killed. "Maybe I shot one of them; I don't know," she said. The men, however, became very proud of her. They began to listen to her and ask her advice about strategy.

This girl could neither read nor write. She knew nothing of Communism. She had taken up arms, she said, because the soldiers of the 8th Route Army were the first who had ever been kind to the people of Kwangtai. If the 8th Route Army was beaten, her life would not be worth living. She was not ambitious. She just wanted to be a working girl. She thought China could build up industry, and she could work in a factory. She hoped she could have a marriage where she would be treated more as an equal. That would give her great satisfaction.

MISU, THE GUERILLA GIRL

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Describe the conditions of Misu's married life which led her to attempt suicide.
2. How did Misu's grandmother feel about Misu's plans to bring about change? Why did she feel this way?
3. What major things occurred that allowed Misu to change her life?
4. List the conditions women might have talked about in their **"Speak Bitterness"** sessions.
5. Describe some things Misu did which would have been considered a new role for women.
6. How do you know that Misu began to have more confidence in herself and her future?

WOMEN IN SOUTH AFRICA AND AND CHINA

	SOUTH AFRICA	CHINA	SHARED EXPERIENCES
Conditions to Be Changed			
Events Which Caused Political Change			
Goals			

	SOUTH AFRICA	CHINA	SHARED EXPERIENCES
Problems			
Effect of Organizing on: • **Family** • **Men** • **Society** • **Women's Personal Lives**			

WOMEN IN CUBA
Women Struggle to Create Changes within the Family

In the last lesson you read about women in the past who sought to improve their lives through active political involvement. In doing this, changes in their personal lives also occurred.

Today you are going to study about women in Cuba who have been able to move beyond this type of political activity.

In 1959, under the leadership of Fidel Castro, Cubans overthrew their old society and established a new one. In old Cuba the position of women was very low. Now, years after their revolution, Cuban women have many political and economic advantages. Yet there has remained a gap between this and their unequal role within their homes.

The new Cuban society has upgraded the position of women. A first step after the revolution was to encourage women to work outside their homes and become active in the total life of the country. Cuba wanted women to work because (a) of the extreme shortage of labor and (b) women could only be made equal to men if they could support themselves.

The government helped women find meaningful work. Currently, women may work at any job. Women receive special training so that they can qualify for the jobs they want. "Equal pay for equal work" is a fact in Cuba. Many women no longer have to depend on men for money.

Haydée Santamarie, an important Cuban woman who has been active in Cuba's revolution, said:

> *The first step the Revolution has taken toward women liberating themselves is support. A woman must have economic support. Because how many women used to stay with a man and not leave him because if she left him what would she give her children to eat? How would it be for her children? And*

> *the poorest would say: "What am I going to give my children to eat?" The Revolution has emancipated women economically; it pays them the same salaries it pays men. It doesn't pay her for being a woman, but for the job she does.*[1]

As the Cuban government assisted women to find work outside the home, it also provided day-care centers for their children, as well as laundry, cafeteria and health services. These services are given free to families.

One interesting idea is the "shopping bag" plan. Working women may leave their shopping lists and bags at the grocery store in the morning and pick up their groceries at night as they return home from work.

All Cubans are expected to take part in decisions which affect their lives. This means that Cubans run their own lives in a new way. People are organized into discussion groups within their neighborhoods, at their work, or at their schools. There they may evaluate ways to improve their work and their neighborhood, and discuss any proposed law that would affect them. For example, any law that affected youth would be discussed at length in the schools. Students could ask that additions be made to the law, or that things be changed or taken out.

In these groups the people elect those who will represent or lead them—for example, their bosses at work. They may recall anyone who displeases them.

Cubans thus are asked to be very responsible for their lives. For women, whose opinions were generally ignored in old Cuba, this new expression allows them to be included in the life of the nation. However, even with the new society, new problems for women have appeared.

The family is the most resistant to change. About ten years after the revolution, Cuban women began to be clear about one fact. Although they now were doing things that they never would have thought possible, they were working harder than men. If

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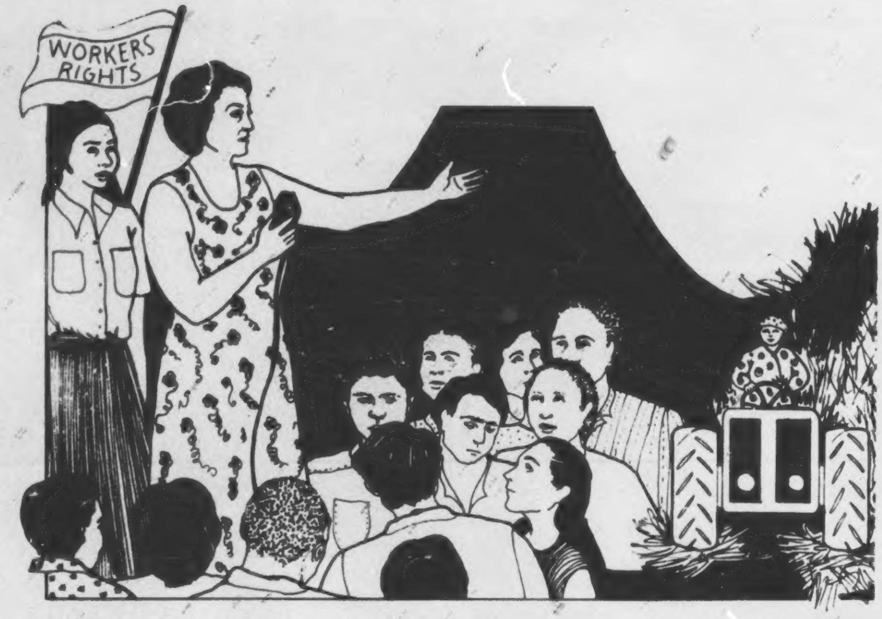
[1] Margaret Randall, *Cuban Women Now,* Toronto, Canada, 1974, p. 317.



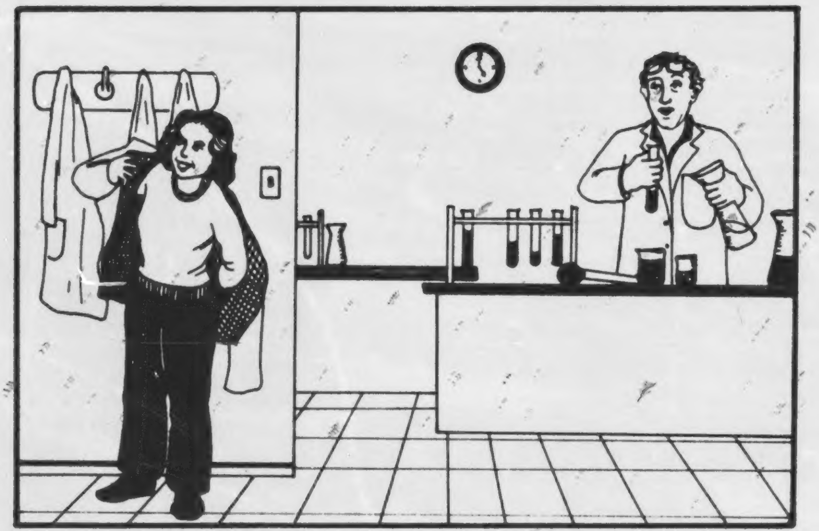
they studied, or worked full time, or were involved in a political project, they were still expected to do all of the housework and child care when they got home. They were doing double duty and were getting tired. Further, this housework and old ideas about excluding women from politics were holding them back from participating in political life. Many more men than women were getting elected to positions of power.

The following dialogue is based on actual quotes taken from some Cubans who began to question the old roles of men and women within the family.

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS THE HOME?*

Setting: Havana, Cuba
Time: 1974
Cast: Elena, a housewife and worker
Ramon, her husband, a dock worker
Marta, neighbor and factory worker
Juan, Marta's son, about 24s years old

Elena and Ramon are relaxing before dinner. Elena is reading the newspaper. She sees this cartoon:



"YA, ACABE CON MI TRABAJO.
AHORA, LEVANTAR LOS MUCHACHOS COCINAR, Y LAVAR."

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*Written by *In Search of Our Past* staff. Based on accounts from this period as cited in the bibliography for this unit.

Elena: Oh, what a great cartoon this is! Look, Ramon, that's the way it really is! Women work all day long—then they put in a second shift at home—doing housework!

Ramon: What do you mean? I thought you women wanted to work. It used to be that women weren't allowed to work like that in factories. Today they cut cane, work in factories, drive trucks, supervise—EVERYTHING! What's the matter? Don't you like your job?

Elena: Of course! My job is not the problem. The housework is the problem! I have *two* jobs, not one. Women are supposed to take part in everything today. They are supposed to attend meetings, make decisions, and study. But, who has time?

Ramon: Honey, you know how much better you are at housework. It's natural for women to do housework and take care of kids.

Marta, a neighbor, enters with Juan, her son: What are you two arguing about?

Elena: Ramon thinks that women are better at doing things around the house. Next he'll be telling me that a woman's place is in the home!

Marta: Everyone's talking about that topic lately. In the supermarket today, a man behind me said 'Shopping is really women's work. They're specialists.' A woman standing in back of him yelled at him, 'Oh sure. And some men are specialists at talking nonsense!'

Elena: It's true. Men have changed a little. But maybe we need rules written that will make everyone's duties clear. In the old days, men could say, 'Don't worry, honey, I'll support you. Or I'll defend you.' But now, since the Revolution, we women work, and some of us even fought in battles. We took on new responsibilities. Now, men *must* help us with the housework and the children.

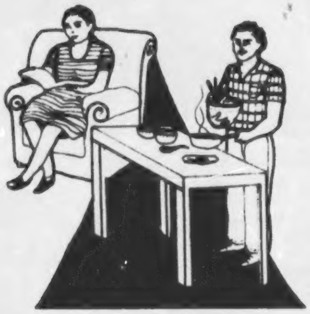
Marta: For sure. But cheer up, Elena. The young men are different these days. Juan, tell Ramon how you and Raquel plan your life after marriage.

Juan: Well, Raquel and I are friends as well as lovers. It's very important to me what she thinks and what she does. We both will be active outside the house, in jobs and in meetings. That means, we'll *both* share the work inside the house. But, my brother still calls his girl friend '*his woman*!' And he calls out to women on the street, 'Hey, you beautiful thing!'

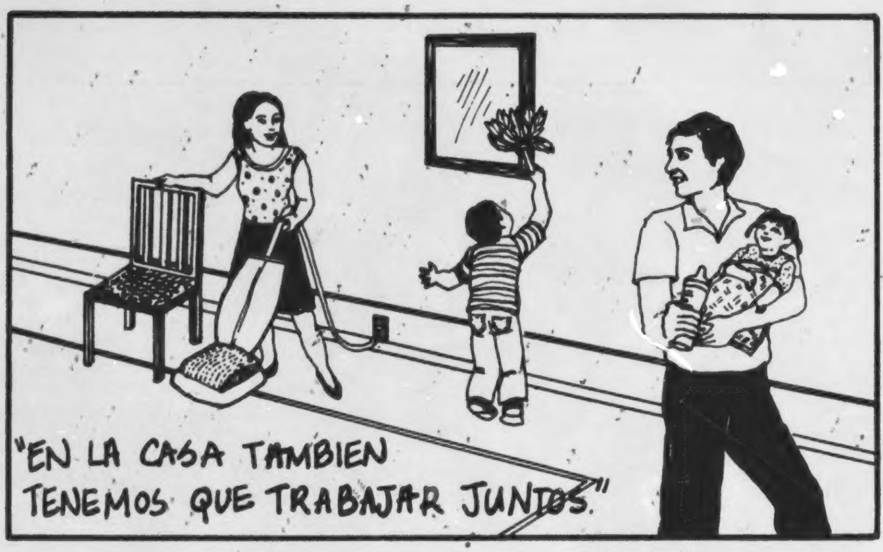
Marta: Your brother is ten years older than you are. We brought you up differently. Everything changed. Why, when I was a girl, I couldn't be seen in the streets after 10 o'clock at night! Now, it's safe for women to be out alone any time.

Juan: Anyway, Ramon, women everywhere, in the cities and the countryside, all agree that men should share home responsibilities. We men can't change their minds about that!

Ramon: Well, I guess it's OK with me. I like this new society. People's lives are different now so our lives at home are bound to be different too. Maybe boys *should* learn how to do things for themselves around the house. OK Elena, how about *me* doing the dishes tonight?



THE FAMILY CODE IN CUBA



At the time that Elena and Ramon were discussing women's and men's responsibilities in the home, Cuban women everywhere felt that they were truly contributing to their new society. They felt needed and important. They felt that they had the right to make demands on their society, and they began to outline ways to make some changes in their homes.

Cuban women were aware that throughout the world, the hardest attitudes to change were attitudes about the roles of women and men within their families. They saw that getting laws passed to insure their rights was one thing, but changing practices and personal feelings was another problem. *Women themselves decided to take steps to institutionalize changes in the family.* They took the following steps:

- Women met together to discuss their mutual problems. They decided that a law was needed that would define people's roles within their families.

- Women then took their concerns to their discussion groups at work, in the neighborhood, and at school. In these mixed groups they began to make their demands for shared household responsibilities.

- The government was forced to listen to them. It introduced a plan called "The Family Code" and asked everyone to discuss it, change it, and then vote on it.

- Everyone over sixteen got a copy of the Code. What followed was a lively debate. Even on the streets, on buses, and in waiting rooms people argued the pro's and con's of this proposed law. Some of the original law was changed as a result of suggestions resulting from this national debate.

- On March 8, 1975 (International Women's Day), the overwhelming majority of Cubans voted to pass the Family Code. It then became the law. It says that:

    - Husbands and wives shall share the housework and child care equally.

    - There is no such thing as an illegitimate child. Any child who is born is legitimate. All children therefore have equal rights.

    - Adopted children have the same rights as all others.

    - There shall be equal responsibilities for men and women in divorce and in child support.

    - Girl and boy children shall be treated equally in the home.

If anyone in the family disobeys this law, the local court, made up of people from the neighborhood, can send that person to work temporarily on a farm, or to a class for re-education.

ORAL INTERVIEW DIRECTIONS

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Make a date in advance with the woman you want to interview. In making this contact be sure to explain the purpose of of the interview and the topics you wish to cover.

2. Allow at least 30 minutes for the interview.

3. Begin the interview by explaining again the purpose of the interview and the topics you wish to cover. Be sure the interviewee consents to be interviewed.

4. Ask only one question at a time. Avoid questions which lead to yes-or-no answers. If you do get yes-or-no responses, ask for an explanation. "Could you explain a little more, please?" Or, "Why did you feel that way?"

5. Take your notes on a separate page.

6. Be patient. Remember, most people have never been interviewed. It is an unusual experience. A person must have time to think about her answer. If you act as if you are in a hurry, the other person doesn't feel that her answers are important to you.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interviewee____

Place of Birth____

Interview a family member or another woman with whom you are comfortable. Begin by explaining to the interviewee the purpose of the interview and how you would like her to help. You might say, "We are doing a unit on Women in Change. We are interested in finding out about what women have done in their lives and what changes they have made."

1. Where were you living when you were my age?

    a. Where did you think you would be living as an adult?

    b. What caused this change, if there was any?

2. When you were my age, did you expect to continue your schooling? What happened? If there have been changes, what caused them?

3. When you were my age, did you think that as an adult you would work?

    What kind of a job did you think you would have?

    Have there been changes between your work expectations then and what you do now?

    What caused these changes?

4. When you were my age, did you want to get married?

5. Did you want to have children? What happened?

   If there have been changes between these expectations and your life now, what caused the changes?

6. What do you think have been the major turning points in your life? What caused them to happen?
7. What is one aspect of your life you would like to change?
8. Was there ever a time in your life when something happened that you didn't think was fair? What did you do about it?
9. Have you ever been involved in any activity or movement designed to change something? What? What role did you play?
10. Do you think that the women's movement has changed your life in any way? How?

BE SURE TO THANK THE WOMAN YOU INTERVIEWED.

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The ideas which were written into the Cuban Family Code and for which the women in South Africa and China have struggled are ideals toward which women all over the world aspire. Through their pressure, women around the world are bringing about change. It can be seen in the home, in the market, at school, and in the faces of political leaders. In 1977, a Gallup Poll was taken of people in 70 nations—representing 90% of the world.[1] People in these countries were asked:

> Do you think that the part played by women in your country is changing a great deal, a fair amount, not much, or not at all?

Their answers reflect what people felt about the changed roles of women in their country. Here are the results of the poll:

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[1] From the poll "A World View of the Status of Women," by George Gallup, as it appeared in the San Francisco *Chronicle*, Spring 1978.

	Great Deal	Fair Amount	Not Much	Not at All	Don't Know
United States	63%	28%	6%	1%	2%
Scandinavia	47	33	18	1	1
Canada	45	42	11	1	1
United Kingdom	40	43	13	1	3
France	38	41	16	1	4
Australia	33	49	14	2	2
Italy	32	50	9	2	7
Japan	32	39	17	4	8
Benelux	31	43	21	2	3
West Germany	13	47	30	2	8
India	6	24	15	5	50
North America	61	29	7	1	2
Western Europe	30	45	18	2	5
Latin America	35	34	20	7	4
Africa	41	31	12	2	14
Far East	26	24	13	4	33

After he did this survey, George Gallup said, "Few social changes in the history of mankind have been so dramatic as that of the changing role of women."

Look at the results of the survey.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

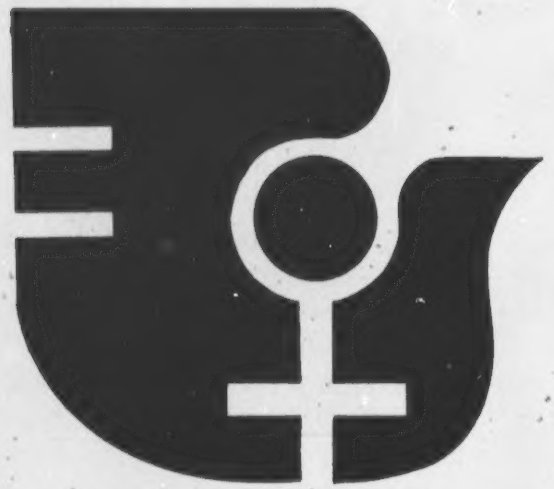
STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Which nation felt that women are changing the most?

2. Recall the countries where Misu, Shanti, Sara Penn (Mother), and Haydée Santamarie live. Without looking at the poll, speculate how you think people in those countries will respond to the question. Which country of the three do you think will indicate the least change in women's participation? Which country will indicate the greatest change? Develop a rationale for your speculations.

3. Look at the poll to see how exact your speculations were:

4. Are there omissions in this poll that bother you? Does the poll give you the information you need to discuss the countries you studied? Can you give an explanation for the lack of statistical breakdown on whole continents?



This logo represents the desires of women throughout the world. It was created for International Women's Year—1975. Can you see in it the symbols for peace, equality, and women?

This symbol is designed to represent the desire of women all over the world to improve their status. The American women's movement is a part of an international women's movement. American women seeking change have friends in every country in the world.

It is important that we continue to look around the world to see what women are doing and listen to what they are saying. In turn, what American women say and do has an effect on change elsewhere. This has been true in the past as well as today. For example, each year millions of women in almost all countries of the world gather in various activities to celebrate International Women's Day. Do you know about it?

- What day does it fall on?
- What is it about?
- How did it begin?

HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 8*

It was American women who gave the world International Women's Day—March 8—now celebrated throughout the world. Now it is celebrated as a day when women draw closer together in their common struggle for peace and justice.

On March 8, 1857, women from the garment and textile industry in New York staged a demonstration protesting low wages, the 12-hour workday and increasing workloads. They called for improved working conditions and equal pay for all working women. Their march was dispersed by police, some of the women were arrested, and some were trampled in the confusion. Three years later, in March of 1860, these women formed their own union and called again for these demands to be met.

On March 8, 1908, thousands of women from the needles trade industry in New York demonstrated for the same demands. But now, over 50 years later, demands for legislation against child labor and the right of women to vote had been added to demands for shorter working hours and better working conditions.

In 1910, at an International Socialist Congress, the German labor leader Clara Zetkin proposed that March 8 be proclaimed International Women's Day in memory of those earlier struggles of women for better lives. It was to be a day set aside to internationally commemorate women's struggles and historical contributions. The day was to be a celebration, as well, of women's current fights for equality and peace.

In the next 60 years, March 8 was celebrated mostly in socialist countries and by women's organizations in many other countries. In Cuba and China the emphasis was upon women as militant participants in revolutions, whereas in the Soviet Union the celebration became similar to our Mother's Day. By 1967, the day began to be celebrated in the United States. In 1970, owing to the growing women's liberation movement, events were planned to celebrate the day in most of the major cities of the United States. In the past few years it has become a widely celebrated day for most women's organizations and groups. Schools, too, often acknowledge this day in some way.

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*"International Women's Day Curricular Materials," Laurie Olsen, Change for Children, San Francisco, 1974.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. What is International Women's Day?

2. List the different reasons for which this day has been celebrated in various countries.

3. What issues do you think Sara Penn, Misu, the women of Cuba and Shanti would select to celebrate on International Women's Day?

4. Would their husbands celebrate with them? Explain.

5. What issues do you think American women should raise at a celebration of International Women's Day? List.

6. Find out as much as you can about International Women's Year and share the information in class.